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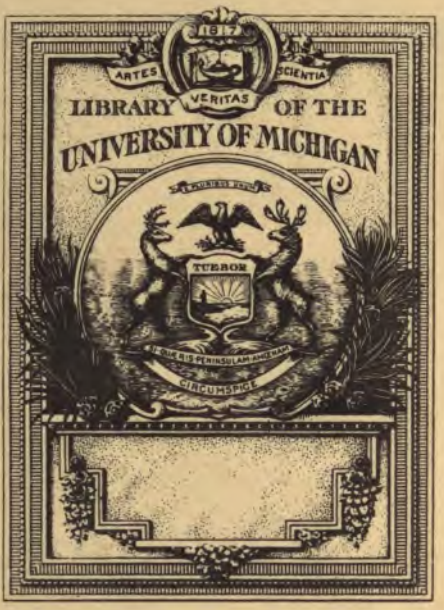
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AN

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ON

EDUCATION;

IN WHICH ARE

PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED

THE

MERITS AND THE DEFECTS

OF THE

DISCIPLINE AND INSTRUCTION

IN OUR

ACADEMIES.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM BARROW, LL.D. & F.A.S.

AUTHOR OF THE BAMPTON LECTURE FOR 1799,

AND LATE MASTER OF THE ACADEMY, SOHO-SQUARE, LONDON.

Tam ſtultè pueros diligimus, ut potiùs odiſſe videamur. CARDAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

HE that profeſſes only to diſcuſs again a ſubject, which has been ſo frequently diſcuſſed already, that little curioſity can be excited, becauſe little novelty can be expected, apparently undertakes to write what has leſs than the ordinary chance to be read. To endeavour to attract the attention of the reader by a title page, from which he is immediately diſpoſed to turn away with contempt or diſguſt; becauſe he has often before found it the prelude to a diſſertation intended, not to inſtruct or amuſe the publick, but to gratify the vanity or promote the intereſt of the individual; this ſurely will be thought an attempt of more temerity than prudence; in which the danger of failure, on one hand, is at leaſt equal to the proſpect of fame or profit on the other. To an *Eſſay on Education* theſe obſervations apply with peculiar force. A work of this deſcription, inſtead of being received with favour, as a treatiſe

tiſe on a ſubject of general concern, is now uſually conſidered as an intereſted recommendation of ſome particular ſchool. The author is ſuſpected, like the ſlaves in the tent of Achilles, when he names Patroclus, to mean himſelf; to talk of the publick good, and intend only his own.

He that opens an Academy, it is ſuppoſed, muſt do ſomething to prove his fitneſs for the office, which he undertakes; and to attract notice and pupils. To the publication of a grammar of our own, or of one of the learned, languages; or a tranſlation of ſome popular work from French or German literature, to an edition with notes of ſome celebrated author, or a collection of inſtructive eſſays or elegant extracts from works more voluminous and expenſive; to a new ſyſtem of pronunciation or of ſpelling, or a new guide to Arithmetick or Geography; to theſe publications, and ſuch as theſe, recourſe has frequently been had, as commodious and creditable modes of announcing to the world at once the name, the talents, and the ſeminary of the editor. To obtain credit or celebrity, however, by works like theſe, requires a conſiderable degree of learning, or of judgment; more indeed than he who undertakes to become the inſtructor of others, is

ſome-

ſometimes found himſelf to poſſeſs; theſe attempts therefore will not in all caſes anſwer the purpoſe intended. To publiſh an Eſſay on Education is an eaſier and ſafer expedient. It is not difficult for an Adventurer, either by his own pen, or the pen of a hireling or a friend, to detail a ſpecious ſyſtem of moral and literary inſtruction, which it is neither intended nor poſſible to reduce to practice; to cenſure the errors and miſconduct of other ſchools, and to inſinuate the ſuperior management of his own; to inculcate with apparent candour general rules and principles, which are in fact merely a recommendation of his own peculiar plan; to declaim on the folly and cruelty of the rod, and the ſuperior advantages of lenity and tenderneſs; to pretend to treat his pupils with the kindneſs and confidence of friendſhip, and to train the infant mind to ſcience and to virtue without toil and diſcipline. To profeſs theſe things is eaſy; and too many parents have been induced to give credit to ſuch profeſſions by their wiſhes to find them true. Such impoſitions are known to have been often practiſed; for they have been often detected and expoſed. No wonder then that an Eſſay on Education ſhould be generally read with ſuſpicion, or frequently thrown aſide with contempt. An Eſſay on Education, indeed, has been employed like the cele-

brated bow of Ulyſſes. Many ſchoolmaſters have tried their ſtrength in it; and not a few, like the nerveleſs ſuitors, have expoſed their weakneſs.

This title, however, hackneyed and degraded as it may appear, I ſhall ſtill venture to employ; not only becauſe it expreſſes the moſt clearly and ſimply the purpoſe of the following pages; but becauſe from all the ſuſpicions, that may attach to ſuch a publication, I am, if not by my character, at leaſt by my ſituation, fortunately exempted. In the courſe of my profeſſional life I often prejudiced my own intereſt by ſpeaking my ſentiments with too much freedom. I ſhall not now diſguiſe them, when there is nothing to be gained by flattery, and nothing to be loſt by truth. If the book be found worthy of the ſubject announced in the title, the title will not eventually injure the effect or reputation of the book.

Quinctilian recommends it as ſuitable employment for the orator of eminence, who has retired from the exerciſe of his profeſſion, to publiſh his ſentiments on the art of eloquence: and the advice appears ſufficiently applicable to him, who has relinquiſhed a kindred, though a humbler, occupation. I write to give the reſult of my own obſervation and experience; and, if, inſtead of advanc-

advancing plauſible and fallacious theories beforehand, with a view to recommend to publick notice individuals and their ſeminaries, ſuch ſchoolmaſters, as have attained eminence in their profeſſion, would afterwards occaſionally give to the world the plans which they had found it expedient or neceſſary to adopt in practice, great deference would be due to their judgment, and ſome good effect muſt be produced. Some additional light would be thrown on a ſubject ſurely of equal importance to any other; for by it every other is eſſentially affected. In the various departments of ſcience, the meaſure here recommended is almoſt always purſued. The profeſſors of law and of medicine publiſh the reſult of their experience and practice. The ſtudents of natural philoſophy aſſemble for the purpoſes of mutual information and aſſiſtance. Every branch of knowledge, indeed, is cultivated by the united talents of numbers; from the purſuits of the ſocieties eſtabliſhed by royal authority in the metropolis, to the voluntary aſſociations of farmers in a provincial town. Education, it muſt be confeſſed, as far as it is merely the art of conveying moral and literary inſtruction, is in itſelf of leſs extent than any department of general ſcience; and it is probable that in it fewer improvements and diſcoveries remain to be made. An occaſional pub-

lication on the ſubject, however, from an experienced teacher, would by no means be without its uſe. Some growing abuſe might be corrected; or ſome faſhionable folly might be repreſſed. The impoſitions of innovators and empiricks might be detected and expoſed; and ſuch plans ſuggeſted, as prevailing opinions and manners, the virtues or vices of the times, ſhould render neceſſary or expedient. No ſyſtem is yet thought perfect in theory: not one has yet been found univerſally ſucceſsful in practice. It was indeed the opinion of Longuerue, more than a century ago, that the world was already in poſſeſſion of a ſufficient number of good books on every ſubject. But it is with the proviſion for the mind as for the appetite; a ſuperfluity is better than a ſcarcity. It is a leſs evil to be perplexed by variety, than to be diſtreſſed by famine. And in the caſe under conſideration the ſmalleſt improvement acquires importance from the frequency of its uſe and application. A more expeditious method of attaining the alphabet or the *pence-table* would deſerve a place amongſt the moſt valuable diſcoveries which accident or ingenuity has ever made.

Beſides the application neceſſary to the immediate buſineſs of inſtruction, I have ſurveyed with ſome attention the profeſſion of a ſchool-maſter

maſter in its actual and poſſible uſe and advantages. I have conſidered the ſituation of the individual, and his relation to the publick; and I have found it an amuſing and intereſting ſpeculation, from education to predict conduct, and to trace conduct back to education. But with what judgment theſe objects have been examined, and what good may reſult from the obſervations now communicated to the publick, it is not within my power or province to determine. Should the reader, however, ſee reaſon to accuſe me of partiality in favour of the character and office of a ſchoolmaſter; though I ſhall venture to plead not guilty to the charge, I ſhall not make any ſtrenuous defence againſt it. It is eaſy to diſclaim prejudice, but not eaſy to avoid it; and my own feelings, I confeſs, are in uniſon with the obſervation of the Roman teacher of rhetorick, that no man wiſhes to ſee the profeſſion, in which he has been diſtinguiſhed, ſink into decay and contempt.

In its claim to ſincerity my book poſſeſſes an obvious advantage in being written after I have quitted the profeſſion. But the ſame circumſtance ſubjects it to an inconvenience of perhaps equal magnitude. I have ſo long intended to write on the ſubject of education, that I cannot

now recollect on what occaſion the deſign firſt occurred to my mind. It aroſe, however, from what I ſaw or felt in the diſcharge of my official duties; and though the reſolution continually gained ſtrength, the inceſſant labours of my occupation prevented its being carried into effect. The book never was begun. Unfortunately not a ſingle anecdote or obſervation was committed to paper: and I now deeply but vainly regret what cannot be recovered. The moſt natural, and therefore the moſt valuable, remarks are made immediately upon the occaſion, by which they are ſuggeſted. The beſt comment on a fact are our own feelings at the moment, corrected by ſubſequent reflection. If any future ſchoolmaſter intend to publiſh his thoughts on education, let him carefully avoid the error into which I have fallen; and record incidents and obſervations at the moment they ariſe in the courſe of his profeſſional employment. After a lapſe of years many facts and ſentiments will be wholly effaced from his memory; and of the reſt, the colours will be not only leſs vivid, but leſs natural and juſt.

It is the buſineſs of a preface to explain the nature and deſign of the publication, which it precedes; that the performance may be compared

with the profeſſions of the writer; the plan with the execution of his work; that the publick may not be ſuffered to expect what they will not find, nor the author condemned for not effecting, what was never intended. I ſhall endeavour neither to incur the cenſure of Horace by oſtentatious promiſes which I cannot fulfil; nor to invite the contempt of the reader by expreſſions of diffidence in myſelf.

The preſent eſſay does not profeſs to ſurprize or gratify the reader with wonder or novelty. No new arts of inſtruction of ſuperior and magical efficacy are ſuggeſted to him; no novel hypotheſis is ſupported. The health, the learning, and the morals of youth were always the objects of education; and the ſubject has engaged the attention and intereſted the affections of many of the wiſeſt and beſt men in all ages and nations. To ſuppoſe myſelf qualified therefore to ſuggeſt means much more expeditious or efficacious, than they were able to diſcover, would imply certainly preſumption, and probably folly. Cheſterfield attempted to build a man after a new model; and Wilkes propoſed, that his ſon ſhould acquire at once the knowledge of books and of the world. That both were diſappointed in the hopes which they had formed of their reſpective projects, is ſufficiently

ſufficiently known; and to men acquainted with the nature of education will occaſion no ſurprize. There are, however, amongſt our modern philoſophers many, who ſeem to have perſuaded themſelves, or to wiſh to perſuade others, that in education, as well as in politicks, whatever is old, is therefore probably wrong; and whatever is new, is therefore probably right. But as the reverſe of the argument is more likely to lead us to truth, as well as to peace, one of the purpoſes which I have in view, is to caution my countrymen againſt thoſe innovations, which ſo many others have recommended; and inſtead of oſtentatiouſly diſplaying ſome new and viſionary project for national inſtruction and improvement, to give vigour and efficacy to the ſyſtem, which we have long and ſucceſsfully purſued. I cannot promiſe the reward of diligence without its fatigues; advancement in knowledge on any other terms than the united labours of the teacher and his pupil. Many valuable expedients have undoubtedly been deviſed to facilitate the acquiſition of learning; but the obſervation of the ancient geometrician is ſtill true in its full force. No royal road has yet been found to ſcience or to virtue.

It is not the deſign of the preſent publication to examine and cenſure the works of others on the

the ſubject. I ſhall not attempt to refute the ingenious theories of *Locke*; or to expoſe the deluſive paradoxes of Rouſſeau. I ſhall not ſtop to enquire, why in the voluminous diſquiſition of Edgworth no place could be found for loyalty or religion: and the pamphlets of ſchoolmaſters may reſt peaceably in the oblivion, by which they are generally ſoon overwhelmed. Incomparably the moſt judicious publication is the "Liberal Education" of Knox. Its foundation is laid, not in fancy and theory, but in human nature and common ſenſe; and its ſuperſtructure is attainable excellence, not ſpeculative perfection. With the ſentiments of this Eſſay, as far as we treat the ſame ſubjects, my own will in general agree. But whether this be the effect of imitation and plagiariſm, or the ſimilar reſult of ſimilar experience, the reader muſt judge for himſelf. In ſome points of importance I ſhall have the misfortune to differ in opinion from the maſter of Tunbridge School; as he whoſe curioſity ſhall lead him to examine our reſpective publications will readily perceive; and the future inſtructor of youth will adopt from each of us thoſe plans of proceeding, which he believes to be moſt for the benefit of his pupils. Dr. Knox has confined his remarks excluſively to *Liberal Education*. The preſent eſſay enters more minutely into the general buſineſs of a ſchool; into

into the arrangements, the inſtruction, and the diſcipline of a modern academy. Here, indeed, is an ample field for uſeful obſervation; and if the preſent work has any pretenſions to novelty, here chiefly muſt it be ſought.

This circumſtance, indeed, has frequently led me into the detail of particulars, that may appear trifling and minute. But let it be remembered, that trifles riſe into importance, when they recur every hour and on every ſubject; that nothing can juſtly be conſidered as trifling, by which the progreſs of education is materially affected; and that,

"Let ſchool-taught pride diſſemble all it can,
Theſe little things are great to little man."

If I have been in ſome inſtances too prolix and minute, I ſhall probably be thought in others too general and conciſe; and topicks well worthy of attention have been wholly omitted; leſt the book ſhould grow too large to be willingly read. On our own univerſities and on foreign travel, for example, which are juſtly conſidered as eſſential objects in liberal education, I have made no obſervations, and given no opinion: and muſt beg the reader to accept for the preſent the ſame apology, which was made by the Roman hiſtorian for paſſing

paſſing ſlightly over Carthage in his narrative; that on ſubjects of ſuch importance I choſe rather to ſay nothing, than not to ſay enough.

If moſt of the obſervations which I have to make appear to have been made before, let it be remembered, that on education, as on moſt other ſubjects, the beſt arguments are generally the moſt obvious; the firſt that occur to every reflecting mind. Though the well-informed reader, therefore, may be ſometimes wearied by the remarks, becauſe they are already familiar to him, he will perceive that they could not be omitted without injuſtice to the opinions which they are adduced to ſupport. The younger Pliny adviſes an orator to employ in every cauſe all the arguments, which his invention can ſupply: becauſe, though he might eaſily ſelect thoſe, which were moſt ſuitable to his purpoſe, and moſt concluſive on the point in queſtion, yet he cannot be ſure, which will have the greateſt influence on the mind of the judge: and the expedient, which was thought eligible in order to carry a cauſe at the bar, may ſurely be adopted without cenſure to recommend the eſſential objects of education.

If again the ſame ſentiments appear to be too frequently repeated; let not that be haſtily condemned,

demned, which could not eaſily be avoided. The different branches of education have nearly the ſame general purpoſe in view; they are cultivated for ſimilar reaſons; recommended by ſimilar arguments; and application and diligence are always enforced by the ſame motives. The ſame praiſe of induſtry, and the ſame cenſure of negligence, in the teacher or the pupil, recur upon a thouſand different occaſions. Moral and religious principles muſt not only on account of their own excellence be taught and enforced upon every ſuitable occaſion; but muſt likewiſe be conſtantly kept in mind, as they are inſeparably connected with all the other objects of inſtruction, and conſtitute the true and ultimate obligation to purſue them. In an eſſay on education, then, repetition muſt be defended on the plea of neceſſity; and the deformities of tautology forgiven for its value.

It may perhaps be thought that I have entered too frequently or too much at large into points, with which the proper object of the eſſay has no neceſſary connection; into diſquiſitions on politicks, morals, or religion. But of this the defence is not difficult; if indeed any defence can be required. The future conduct of the man in every ſituation of life depends in a great meaſure upon his early inſtruction and early habits. Literature

is

is only one of the means, by which wealth or honours, virtue and happineſs are to be obtained. Every man muſt be a moral agent; but it is not neceſſary that every man ſhould be a ſcholar. Aſtronomy and mathematicks are remotely and occaſionally uſeful: integrity, humanity and piety, are the duties of every day. In the courſe of the work it will be ſhewn more at large in what manner and for what reaſons I wiſh every youth to be taught early to underſtand and to revere that form of civil government, of which he is to become a ſubject; to be habituated even from his infancy to the principles and the practice of the pureſt morality; and to that ſyſtem of religious doctrine and worſhip, on which we believe his preſent and future happineſs to depend.

There is yet one point more, which may require explanation or apology; the *Egotiſm*, which pervades ſo many parts of the work. It is almoſt of the eſſence of the work itſelf. My deſign is to tell, what I have ſeen or felt; to give opinions founded upon my own experience or obſervation: to point out to parents and children the errors, by which I have myſelf been perplexed; to future ſchoolmaſters the road, which I have myſelf travelled; and which, I ſuppoſe, will lead them to their object with the greateſt eaſe and expedition.

Theſe

Theſe various obſervations and apologies are here made once for all; that the ſubſequent diſquiſitions need not be interrupted by the perpetual repetition of ſuch of them as occaſion might ſeem to require: and it is preſumed that the reader will pardon the additional length of the preface, when it is intended to ſhorten the different chapters of the book. My work, ſuch as it is, I now commit to the preſs, for the benefit of a profeſſion, to which I am attached by inclination, as well as by habit; and of that publick, to which every individual owes the beſt ſervices, that his natural or acquired talents have fitted him to perform: and if any proportion, however ſmall, of the parents, the teachers, or the ſtudents of my country be rendered by it more diligent or ſkilful in the momentous concerns of education, I ſhall have no reaſon to repent of having quitted the more laborious duties of my occupation; my book will not have been written in vain.

SOUTHWELL,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE,
March 1, 1802.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

Page

ON the Importance and Neceſſity of a right Education - - - 1

CHAP. II.

On the Prejudices of Education - - 31

CHAP. III.

On the Diſcipline and Inſtruction of Infants - - - 61

CHAP. IV.

On the comparative Advantages of publick and private Education - - 88

CHAP. V.

On the Choice of a School - - 125

CHAP. VI.

On conſulting the Genius in order to determine the Profeſſion - - 154

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Page

On the Eſtimation, the Treatment, and the Grievances of the Maſters of our Academies - - - 184

CHAP. VIII.

On Grammars - - - 229

CHAP. IX.

On the Study of the Engliſh Language 248

CHAP. X.

On Writing, Arithmetick, and the Mathematicks - - - 274

CHAP. XI.

On the Study of the Claſſicks - - 299

AN

AN

ESSAY

ON

EDUCATION.

CHAP. I.

On the Importance and Neceſſity of a right Education.

BY Education I would be underſtood to mean not only the inſtruction given to a youth for the regulation of his manners, and for his improvement in literature and morals; but every opinion, which he has imbibed, and every habit, which he has contracted; whether from reading, obſervation, and reflection; or from the influence of his propenſities and paſſions, and of the example of his companions.

panions and friends; the whole ſyſtem of thought and action, which he has acquired at that period of life, when he is releaſed from the authority of his parents and teachers, and permitted to be maſter of his own conduct. The importance, and therefore the neceſſity, of a well directed education, in this comprehenſive ſenſe of the term, is ſo readily and ſo generally confeſſed, that to enlarge upon it may perhaps be thought an unneceſſary waſte of the time both of the author and the reader. But there are men, who do not willingly admit the value of ſtudies, which, as Malherbe obſerves, have no tendency to lower the price of bread; and indeed the general truth ſeems to be acknowledged without definite ideas of what is comprehended under it; without the due impreſſion of its utility upon the mind. A ſtatement more in detail, therefore, of its uſe and advantages may poſſibly awaken a more rational and vigorous attention; and may form no unſuitable intro-

introduction to a profeſſed treatiſe on the ſubject.

Every man is what his education has made him in a much greater degree, than ſuperficial obſervers will eaſily believe. How far his principles and his conduct, his ſucceſſes or his misfortunes, the happineſs or miſery of his life depend upon it, ſeems to be not fully known, or not duly conſidered. So helpleſs is the condition, in which man is left by nature; ſo incapable is he, not only of attaining ſcience and enjoyment, but of providing for his own ſubſiſtence and ſafety; ſo much is he the creature of the care of others, and of his own exertions; ſo wonderful is the difference between what he is at his birth, and what he becomes at his maturity; that amongſt the other inſtances of his ſuperiority over the reſt of the animal creation, he has been ſaid, with hardly more boldneſs of language, than force of truth, to enjoy the proud preeminence of being his own maker;

of enlarging and forming his various powers by his own diligence and ſkill. The human mind in its infancy has often been compared to a portion of paper without any impreſſion; to an empty reſervoir, or a vacuum in nature; and the compariſons are ſufficiently accurate to illuſtrate the truths, which they are intended to ſupport; that the moſt ſimple of our ideas are not innate and unborrowed; that we have no acquaintance with external objects, but what is received through the medium of the ſenſes; and conſequently no principles of reaſoning upon them, but ſuch as are acquired by inſtruction and reflexion: in one word, no knowledge, but what we owe to education.

Human knowledge has frequently been conſidered under the three principal diviſions of hiſtory, of ſcience, and of the arts; and theſe have been reſpectively aſſigned to the three great powers of the mind, the memory, the reaſon, and the imagi-

imagination. It is the peculiar province of memory to retain ſuch facts as have been collected reſpecting the operations of nature and the tranſactions of mankind; of reaſon, to form compariſons, diſtinctions and concluſions throughout the whole circle of ethical and mathematical ſcience; and of imagination, to combine or diverſify the ideas already acquired, and to exhibit them in the various and elegant productions of the ſtatuary, and the muſician, the painter, and the poet. Of theſe powers, however, the ſtrength and extent in no ſmall degree depend upon the cultivation they have received.

The art of memory, ſays Johnſon, *is the art of attention.* We beſt remember that, to which we moſt diligently apply; and this diligent application not only enables us to preſerve in our recollection the particular facts on which it has been exerted, but gives new powers to the faculty itſelf; till the terms of a language, the narratives of hiſtory, and the demon-

ſtrations of ſcience are retained with ſuch eaſe and fidelity, as he only, who has made the experiment, will eaſily conceive. With reſpect to our reaſoning faculties, it is obvious how greatly they are enlarged and improved on all ſubjects, on which they have been ſtudiouſly and habitually employed; and that without ſuch employment and habit we ſhould not be able, on one hand, to detect the fallacies of ſophiſtry and the artifices of impoſture; nor on the other, to purſue the proceſs of legitimate argument, and to diſcover and enforce the concluſion. That ſkill and taſte in the works of art; the powers required to produce them ourſelves, or to reliſh them, when produced by others, are wholly obtained by inſtruction and application, will not be diſputed by him, who recollects, that theſe powers are poſſeſſed with reſpect to thoſe objects alone, on which we have repeatedly exerted, or been taught to exert them.

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That our faculties in general are in a great degree acquired by time and ſtudy will be the more readily allowed, when it is conſidered, that without ſuch application many of them will never be enjoyed; but that by negligence and inaction they will all be certainly impaired or loſt. The quickneſs of the ſchool boy in the compoſition of an epigram, or the committing an ode of Horace to memory; and even the labourer's ſtrength in raiſing a weight, or his dexterity in manual operations, are often augmented beyond what either had preſumed to hope; and ſucceſs and reputation are obtained, where nothing was expected but unavailing toil and unavoidable diſgrace. That all men are endowed by nature with equal capacities, and that all by the ſame diligence might attain to the ſame excellence, it would be contrary to common ſenſe and to common experience to maintain; but it may be ſafely aſſerted that our faculties both of body and mind are always improved and often

created, by habit and exertion; and habit and exertion are only other names for education.

That all ſcience is actually obtained by inſtruction and ſtudy will hardly require to be proved. Nature, it is true, muſt give the capacity; but it does not appear that nature gives any part of the ſcience itſelf; or even the wiſh to obtain it. We are indeed ſo early taught to covet information, that the deſire is ſometimes ſuppoſed to be inſtinctive and innate. But no man is ambitious to underſtand that, of which he never heard, and of which he never felt the want. The ſavage may wiſh to improve his dexterity in the chace, becauſe he is aware it would improve the comforts of his exiſtence. But he feels no anxiety to underſtand the demonſtrations of Euclid, or the beauties of the Iliad. Curioſity may be conſidered as the offspring, as well as the parent, of knowledge. Information is deſired only when the pleaſure of it has been felt; when

when its good effects have been experienced, and one acquiſition brings another within our reach. "Knowledge," ſays Johnſon, "always deſires increaſe; it is like fire, which muſt firſt be kindled by ſome external agent, but will afterwards propagate itſelf." To direct the time, to furniſh the means, and to determine the objects of theſe acquiſitions is the buſineſs of education: and this buſineſs will not be thought without value and importance, when it is conſidered, that the want or the poſſeſſion of ſcience, conſtitutes the principal diſtinction between man and man; between the moſt uncultivated ſavage on the barren ſands of Africa, and the moſt poliſhed inhabitant of the happier climates of Europe. The difference between the learned and the illiterate, ſays Ariſtotle, is hardly leſs than the difference between the living and the dead.

To ſome fallacious arguments againſt the utility of the arts and ſciences,

founded upon the miſchiefs which they have ſometimes occaſioned to individuals or to ſociety; and to ſome modern declamation upon the miſeries of civilization, and the comparative advantages of the ſavage ſtate, it cannot be neceſſary to offer any elaborate reply. That reaſoning which is drawn from the abuſe of any object, has never been conſidered as concluſive againſt it, when more wiſely employed. It is no objection to ſome productions of nature, that they may by different management be converted either into food or poiſon. It is no diminution of the value of learning to aſſert, that it may become, in the hands of one man, a ſceptre to govern the world, and in the hands of another a ſcourge to be dreaded, or a bauble to be deſpiſed.

Nor are the benefits of education confined ſolely to the improvement of our intellectual faculties; they may and ought to be extended to the regulation of our appetites and paſſions. With repect to

our appetites, properly ſo called, it is certainly not in the power of inſtruction and diſcipline to augment or diminiſh the number which nature has implanted. All that can be effected, and all that is required, is to confine them within the limits, which the underſtanding ſhall preſcribe. But with reſpect to the paſſions, they may by ſkilful management be moulded to almoſt any form, and directed to almoſt any point. Fully to explain in what manner, and to what degree education influences, and ought to influence, the affections of the heart, it would be neceſſary to detail a complete ſyſtem of ethicks. All that is here intended is merely to point out what inſtruction and habit may perform on the ſubject, and the conſequent obligation to perform it. The ſource of our paſſions is undoubtedly in nature; but the ſtream may be ſo much augmented; its direction or its colour may be ſo greatly changed; and its rapidity ſo much acce-

lerated or retarded by thoſe adventitious and counter currents, which art will always be able to ſupply, that little of the original ſpring will be diſcovered, and ſtill leſs of its influence and effects. Of ſome of thoſe paſſions no undue violence would appear; of others the exiſtence would hardly be obſerved, were they not called into action by accidental and artificial excitements; by the erroneous aſſociation of our own ideas, by the prevalence of the imagination over the judgment; and by the extravagant value which opinion and faſhion often capriciouſly affix to certain objects of our purſuit. The ſeeds of ambition or avarice, for example, may be implanted by nature; but the paſſions themſelves can be matured only by the proximity of their objects. No man can be covetous till he has learned the uſe and value of money. No man can be ambitious till he has been made ſenſible of the advantages of diſtinction and authority. In what eſtima-

eſtimation a garland of the leaves of the oak or the laurel was formerly held, and what perſonal dignity is ſuppoſed to be derived in our own times from the ornament of a ribband or a ſtar, it is not neceſſary to ſtate; but the circumſtances may be mentioned with propriety to ſhew to what extent inſtruction and habit may influence human affections; and conſequently how much in this reſpect is within the province and the power of education. Care muſt be taken, and if judiciouſly exerted it is never wholly unſucceſsful, to guard the mind of the youthful ſtudent againſt all ſuch aſſociations of ideas, as are either abſurd in themſelves, or may be ruinous in their effects; and to preſerve his imagination in due ſubjection to his judgment; at an equal diſtance from indifference on one ſide, and from enthuſiaſm on the other. No opportunity muſt be neglected of pointing out to him, where faſhionable opinions are at variance with ſound reaſon,

ſon, and where popular applauſe is beſtowed without juſtice; that he may never become the dupe of the one, or the ſlave of the other. He muſt be inceſſantly inſtructed to affix his notions of honour, and to reſt his expectations of happineſs, upon their proper objects; not upon the elevation of his rank, the poſſeſſion of money, or the ornaments of dreſs; but upon dutiful ſubmiſſion to his lawful ſuperiors, and diligence in the purſuit of his own improvement; not upon licentious wit, or more licentious intrigue; but upon learning, piety and virtue. This part of the buſineſs of education cannot be too ſtrongly recommended to our teachers, and ſucceſs in it cannot be too much applauded.

Literary information is by no means without its uſe and value as a ſource of amuſement for thoſe hours of life, which are not occupied either by the pleaſures of ſociety or the duties of a profeſſion. Ariſtotle reckons it amongſt the advantages

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of a good education, that it enables a man to employ his leiſure well. When the barbarian is not engaged in the purſuit of ſubſiſtence, or the ſtratagems of war, he waſtes his time in the exceſſes of intoxication, or the inactivity of repoſe. But the man of ſcience has employment for his unoccupied hours, which relieves his mind from the pain of vacancy, and of which even ſolitude cannot deprive him: for it cannot ſeparate him from the poſſeſſion of knowledge, nor from his habits of meditation and reflexion. The whole of life is allowed by all to be little; yet are many portions of it ſupported by almoſt every man with ſome degree of impatience; and in wearineſs or leiſure literature ſupplies a relaxation, not only more rational but more pleaſing, than the gaming table or the tavern. Epicurus, indeed, placed idleneſs amongſt the delights of Elyſium: but Monteſquieu, with greater juſtice, would include it amongſt the torments of Tartarus.

Idleneſs, however, is not more to be dreaded as the ſource of miſery, than as the parent of vice. Its noxious influence upon the affections of the heart is univerſally known and lamented; and nothing will be thought without importance, by which that influence may be reſiſted or diminiſhed. A taſte for literary purſuits, as it enlarges and diverſifies our ideas, as it affords either repoſe without inaction, or employment without laſſitude, has a natural tendency to reſtrain the impetuoſity and to calm the tumult of the paſſions; and may therefore be conſidered as one of the guardians of innocence; as one of the auxiliaries of virtue. Reading indeed is not only a very pleaſing amuſement while it laſts; but muſt likewiſe be reckoned amongſt the moſt eligible modes of acquiring practical wiſdom. The obſervation of Alphonſo of Arragon has been often repeated, and will not be contradicted; that books tell us what we ought to know, without any

ſiniſter purpoſe in view; without ſelf-intereſt, without flattery, and without offence. They will inſtruct us in our duty without mortifying us by a ſenſe of inferiority to our teachers; they will reprove our foibles without ſubjecting us to ridicule; and cenſure our vices without expoſing us to ſhame.

One of the important advantages of diſcipline and inſtruction in early youth is the melioration of the temper. Without habitual ſubjection to precept and authority, every irritation would break forth into violence and outrage, and every deſire would become ungovernable; reſentment of injuries, real, or ſuppoſed, would exert itſelf in revenge; and impatience of reſtraint would ſoon ripen into diſobedience and rebellion. That total diſguiſe of ſentiment, which conſtitutes hypocriſy; that diſhonourable ſuppreſſion of feeling, which is ſubſervient only to private intereſt; the paſſive ſubmiſſion of a ſlave, and the artful ſycophancy of a courtier,

courtier, theſe ought to excite in the ingenuous minds of youth, only contempt and abhorrence. But that decent and ſettled command of temper, which a good education is known to give, and habit to confirm, this is uſeful and creditable alike to the individual and to ſociety. To the former it preſerves tranquillity of mind, and to the latter good humour and good manners. It guards the pleaſure of the lighter amuſements, facilitates the tranſactions of buſineſs, and adds grace to the performance of moral duties.

There is another advantage reſulting from the circumſtances of a *ſcholaſtic* education, of more value to the future man, than will at firſt ſight be eaſily ſuppoſed; the power, by which, whatever can be done, can be done at once; by which intellectual wealth can be immediately produced in current coin; that ſelf-poſſeſſion, by which he can at all times determine and perform what the occaſion requires; that promptitude of thought and

and action, ſo eſſentially neceſſary to eminence in any publick profeſſion; that ready and ſpontaneous eloquence, which is no leſs uſeful in buſineſs, than pleaſing in converſation; that command over his inclinations and paſſions, which enables him to convert to his own purpoſes the paſſions and inclinations of others; that confidence in himſelf and his own ſtrength, which guards him againſt ſurprize, and leads him to meet difficulty or danger without diſmay—theſe advantages, with all their various branches and dependencies, are, not indeed univerſally and excluſively, but the moſt early, the moſt frequently, and the moſt effectually obtained from the diſcipline, the ſtudies, and the amuſements of a large and well regulated ſchool. It is the obſervation of Bacon, that "Reading makes a full man, converſation makes a ready man, and writing makes an exact man." But unleſs the foundation of theſe various excellencies be laid in the uſual ſeaſon of inſtruction,

ſtruction, a ſuperſtructure is ſeldom afterwards erected of much beauty or utility.

It is a familiar but principal purpoſe of education to prepare the youth for his future deſtination in the world. To the general improvement of his mind muſt be given a peculiar direction towards the object, on which it will be moſt uſeful, and moſt immediately required. This indeed is equally the dictate of nature and of experience. Human capacity is not ſufficiently large for the comprehenſion of all ſciences; nor is human life of ſufficient duration for the acquiſition. We therefore turn the attention of the pupil in early youth, to what appears moſt neceſſary to the future man; that he may not only become fully acquainted with the ſubject, but attached to it by time and cuſtom. A trade or a profeſſion, merchandiſe or ſcience, a publick or a private ſtation, require each their reſpective modes of preparation. In ſome meaſure, indeed, they require different objects of ſtudy,

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different habits of thought and conduct, and even different company and connexions; and upon theſe depend in no ſmall degree the ſucceſs of the youth in his purſuits; his utility in his ſtation; the comfort and happineſs of his life. Education undoubtedly performs but half its taſk, unleſs it prepare us for the duties of our ſtation in the world, as well as for the ſpeculations or the pleaſures of ſcience. It was the praiſe of the preceptor of Achilles, that he taught his pupil to act as well as to ſpeak.

What are uſually called ornamental accompliſhments conſtitute another of the numerous advantages of education. The features and the limbs are little leſs ſubject to diſcipline and management, than the faculties of the mind. The accompliſhments under conſideration, however, like every other inſtance of dexterity, can be acquired only by early inſtruction and continued practice. But when once they reach their maturity in an eaſy and polite addreſs;

addreſs; they compleat what good temper had begun; they give grace to the manners of the individual, and facility to ſocial intercourſe; they add new luſtre to ſcience, and new ornaments to virtue.

Literature, however, with all its excellence and advantages, is only the inferior and inſtrumental part of education. Studies of yet greater importance demand the attention of the teacher and his pupil. Science is indeed one of the beſt means we employ; but virtue and happineſs are the benefits which we ultimately hope to obtain. Nor is it leſs neceſſary that inſtruction and ſtudy be early and conſtantly directed to theſe eſſential objects, than to thoſe, which ſeem to fall more immediately within the province and diſcipline of a ſchool. If it be admitted that there are no innate ideas in the mind, it ſeems impoſſible there ſhould be any innate principles of virtue. Before we can think and act with a reference to moral rectitude, we muſt be taught to com-

comprehend its nature, and its rules; and in what manner and degree thoſe around us are to be affected by our conduct. But if ſimple ideas are not implanted by nature in the intellect, it is abſurd to expect that thoſe ideas ſhould be given in complicated and extenſive combinations. Though the maxims of our duty are ſo admirably adapted to our reaſon, and our ſituation, that whenever they are underſtood, they muſt be approved; yet there is no deciſive evidence that they are natural and inſtinctive; originally impreſſed upon the mind by him, who made the mind itſelf. Till a conſiderable portion of time and labour has been employed upon the inſtruction of our children, they do not ſhew much attachment to truth and juſtice, or much tendency to humanity and benevolence. On the contrary, indeed, they ſeem more diſpoſed to ſeize for their own uſe, whatever has captivated their fancy, or promiſes to gratify their appetites; and to terrify and torture for their

their amuſement whatever unfortunate animals chance has put into their power *. Hiſtory and experience uniformly and unhappily teſtify, that care and diſcipline are indiſpenſibly neceſſary to form the human mind to virtue, as well as to ſcience. The fruits of the earth do not more obviouſly require labour and cultivation to prepare them for our uſe and ſubſiſtence, than our faculties demand inſtruction and regulation, in order to qualify us to become upright and valuable members of ſociety, uſeful to others, or happy in ourſelves. Learning and information of themſelves tend to rectify the affections and improve the morals; and whenever ſuperior abilities are united with

* To this obſervation there are indeed many apparent exceptions. Inſtances are not unfrequent of boys who diſdain ſuch principles and conduct; and exhibit examples of ſuch juſtice and humanity, as would adorn any ſtation at any period of life. But theſe may be always traced to the previous care, and therefore ought to be noticed to the honour, of the parents and teachers.

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corrupt principles, the union is as contrary to nature, as it is miſchievous to the community. If indeed there be any truth in the faſhionable doctrine, that vice is only error, and that evil is never choſen but when it is miſtaken for good, then certainly muſt knowledge be the handmaid of duty, and the improvement of the underſtanding contribute to the amendment of the heart. But when the maxims of moral duty are engraven on the youthful mind, together with the truths of ſcience, by continued and repeated inſtruction; when conviction has learned to approve, what authority firſt enjoined; and habit has confirmed what conviction has approved; then do they generally become the guide of conduct, and the ornament of life. Principles thus eſtabliſhed may be occaſionally neglected or tranſgreſſed; but they will ſeldom be wholly corrupted or deſtroyed. The impreſſion will hardly ever be totally effaced. But laxity in the ſyſtem of in-

ſtruction is uſually followed by ſuch a laxity of principle, as no ſubſequent care can rectify. Such, indeed, there is too often reaſon to obſerve and to lament, as not even its own ill conſequences and the miſeries of the tranſgreſſor can induce him effectually to correct and reform.

For the ſupport of virtue, education has a yet more ſolemn taſk to perform, to inſtruct the ſtudent in the doctrines and precepts of the Chriſtian religion. Some fanciful or malignant theoriſts of modern times have, indeed, maintained, that every man ſhould be left to form his own notions of the great creator from the contemplation of his works, and to regulate his faith and worſhip by his own diſcoveries and his own concluſions. But it is found by experience that ſentiments of piety ſeldom take firm poſſeſſion of the mind, unleſs they are impreſſed upon it by the inſtruction and habits of early youth: and religion is to be conſidered,

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not only as forming the relation between man and his God, as creator and creature, as governour and ſubject; but as the ſupport of the relation between man and man; as the foundation and principle of moral and ſocial duties. It is the only rule that is univerſal in its application; the only obligation that is intelligible and unanſwerable; the only law that is ſanctioned by adequate authority. In ſupport of theſe ſentiments we have the concurrent teſtimony of all ages and nations. Antient as well as modern legiſlators have united a religious eſtabliſhment with their political inſtitutions; and whether acquainted only with the doctrines of heathen ſuperſtition, or enlightened by the pure theology of the goſpel, they have equally preſcribed the inſtruction of youth in the faith and worſhip, as well as in the arts and ſciences, of their country. Here then is the moſt momentous duty of education; for here is of all that is truly amiable and uſeful,

founded upon arguments, to which children are little diſpoſed to attend, becauſe little able to underſtand them; to enforce it becomes almoſt excluſively the buſineſs of authority; of that authority, which the parent ſupports over his own child, or which he delegates to the teacher. The proper exerciſe of this authority, indeed; the due medium between unnatural ſeverity and ruinous indulgence; the qualifications of the ſchoolmaſter, and the confidence that ought to be repoſed in him; the neceſſity of mutual reſpect and ſupport between the preceptor and the father; and the diſappointments which both muſt often prepare themſelves to expect; theſe topicks, and others connected with theſe, there will be in the courſe of the work frequent opportunities to diſcuſs. They will recur in almoſt every page. At preſent, therefore, let it only be obſerved, that the due management of youth by parents

and teachers, is a duty, of which the magnitude is equalled only by the difficulty; it is an obligation from which nothing can abſolve them.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

On the Prejudices of Education.

ARGUMENT or declamation againſt the abſurdities and miſchiefs of prejudice is to be found in a thouſand authors; and has been received by a thouſand readers with approbation or conviction. Local and national prepoſſeſſions can hardly be traced more early in the page of the hiſtorian, than the ridicule or cenſure of them in the ſarcaſms of the ſatyriſt, or the diſquiſitions of the philoſopher. In order to weaken the credit of the opinions of his antagoniſt, one of the firſt expedients of a modern diſputant is to aſcribe them wholly or partially to the prejudices of intereſt or of habit. When we diſcover any preference for the laws, the cuſtoms, and the manners of our country, or connections, men of other

nations are ready to cenſure or deſpiſe the narrowneſs of our minds, and the prejudices of our education. He who is deſirous to introduce novel opinions to the world, on whatever ſubject, pleads earneſtly for the candour and impartiality of his hearers; and ſeldom fails to inſinuate that the ſentiments of his predeceſſors were greatly influenced in their riſe and continuance by the prevailing but erroneous notions of the times: but above all, he that wiſhes for innovation in the doctrines of religion and civil policy; to produce revolutions in the eſtabliſhments of the church or the ſtate, *he* imputes to habit, authority and prejudice the principles on which theſe eſtabliſhments were originally founded, and the ſentiments by which they have been hitherto ſupported. This laſt expedient, indeed, is univerſally adopted by a numerous claſs of theoriſts of the preſent times. They have, it muſt be allowed, the greateſt novelty in their doctrines, and the greateſt zeal in their propagation.

propagation. In order to enſure ſucceſs to their purpoſes, however, they are under the neceſſity of extending the charge of prejudice to almoſt every ſentiment hitherto received as uſeful, honourable, or ſacred, to almoſt every affection of the heart, and every concluſion of the underſtanding. Nor has their declamation or their ſophiſtry been without very ſerious effects. It has been able at leaſt to bring the term into contempt or diſgrace. Many of the young, the inexperienced, and the ſanguine amongſt us, are ſo eager to ſhow their candour and impartiality, that their ſtrongeſt prejudice ſeems to be againſt all prejudice whatever. They are ſo hoſtile to what they call bigotted attachment to ancient inſtitutions or principles, that they become bigots to laxity itſelf. They are indeed more afraid of the imputation of bigotry or prejudice, than of confutation in argument, or conviction of abſurdity. They are indiſpoſed towards every cuſtom which can plead

long continuance and preſcription; and treat all received opinions with jealouſy and ſuſpicion; leſt they ſhould contribute to perpetuate error, and to ſupport eſtabliſhments injurious to the free exerciſe of reaſon and the natural rights of man.

Let not all our prejudices, however, be involved without diſtinction in this general ſentence of condemnation. Let ſome enquiry be made whether what are allowed to be frequent, and appear to be natural, may not admit of apology or juſtification; whether many of thoſe prejudices are not, indeed, like almoſt every thing elſe, uſeful while moderate and reaſonable, and culpable only in their exceſs. If their cauſe be as hopeleſs, as ſome modern philoſophers would repreſent it, it will by diſcuſſion be but the more effectually expoſed; and if it have truth and juſtice on its ſide, an advocate of ordinary talents may be ſucceſsful in its defence. It will appear upon examination, it is preſumed, that to extirpate all our preju-

prejudices, in the preſent ſtate of human nature, if it were beneficial, is not poſſible; and if it were poſſible, would not be beneficial.

Prejudice in its moſt extenſive ſenſe, and in the ſenſe in which it ſeems at preſent to be employed, is ſynonymous with prepoſſeſſion. It includes every opinion embraced without due examination beforehand: every affection or averſion, eſteem or contempt, which, whether well or ill founded, whether juſt or unjuſt in itſelf, has been wholly or partially adopted from any other motive than fair conſideration and conviction; upon any other evidence than the preponderance of probabilities impartially weighed and rightly determined. The abſtract and demonſtrative truths of ſcience, and the facts of hiſtory or phyſicks, eſtabliſhed upon unqueſtionable teſtimony or unequivocal experiment, are not the ſubjects of the preſent diſquiſition. When theſe are once known, they are no longer diſputed or

denied. No man, by whom they are fully underſtood, controverts them in theory, or acts in oppoſition to them in practice. Prejudices exiſt only with reſpect to points of opinion properly ſo called; with reſpect to ſuch doctrines of ethics, politicks, or religion, as do not admit ſcientifick demonſtration; and are therefore expoſed to the influence of our infirmities and paſſions.

Now if this ſtatement be juſt, it will not be eaſy to ſpecify any human opinion, which, in zeal for an hypotheſis, or in the irritation of controverſy, may not be ſtigmatized by an antagoniſt as a prejudice. For few can be named that have been received with ſuch impartiality and indifference, as the phlegm of *philoſophiſm* ſeems to require; not one, perhaps, in which the underſtanding has acted independently of all influence from the affections.

Of the effects of habit ſomething has been ſaid already, and much remains to be

be ſaid hereafter. Its value, indeed, and its neceſſity are univerſally acknowledged. Its importance in producing dexterity in the duties of a profeſſion, and preparing men for the buſineſs of their reſpective employments; in contributing to our contentment and ſatisfaction in our ſeveral ſtations, and giving conſiſtency and ſtability to the human character; its utility in creating pleaſure and facility in the exerciſe of virtue, and its danger, from the difficulty of correcting it, in the practice of vice; all theſe points are too generally admitted to require argument or illuſtration. But whatever may be the value of habit, one conſtant effect of it is prepoſſeſſion in favour of thoſe modes of thought and action, which itſelf has rendered familiar to us. Habit is indeed the natural parent of prejudice; and prejudice, with a ſort of filial piety, ſupports eſtabliſhed habit. The purpoſe at preſent is to ſhew that prejudices have always poſſeſſed, and always muſt poſſeſs, a conſiderable

ſiderable ſhare in the origin and in the ſupport of our ſentiments and our conduct.

The inſtincts and propenſities of our nature, and the accidental circumſtances of our ſituation; the regard we feel for our parents and teachers, and gratitude to our friends and benefactors; the ſtudies of our early youth, and familiarity with the objects, which have always ſurrounded us; the coincidence of opinions with thoſe, which we have been accuſtomed to entertain; or their fitneſs to gratify our paſſions, or promote our intereſt; deference to the judgment of men of acknowledged wiſdom, or to the authority of thoſe inveſted with power; attachment to eſtabliſhed doctrines from the love of peace, or oppoſition to them from the ambition of ſingularity; theſe cauſes, and ſuch as theſe, have in no ſmall degree guided our reaſoning and our concluſions on every ſubject that has engaged our attention; and have greatly, and

almoſt equally, influenced the feelings of the heart and the deciſions of the underſtanding.

In the operation of almoſt all our paſſions may be traced a conſiderable proportion of prejudice. Fear and hope, love and hatred, joy and ſorrow, ariſe in a great degree according to our habitual modes of thought and feeling, and from objects of which we have been already prepoſſeſſed with a good or ill opinion, with ſentiments of enmity or favour. Even taſte and judgment are by no means exempt from the ſame influence. That every man decides upon excellence in the arts, by ſome ſtandard which accident or cuſtom has fixed in his mind, however it may be lamented, has ſeldom been denied; and it has been ſhewn, that our idea of beauty even in the human form is not derived from any abſtract and ſettled principles of order, colour, and proportion; but that it is annexed to thoſe features which have been moſt frequently ſeen;

ſeen; and which are the moſt pleaſing to us, becauſe they are the moſt familiar.

It is obvious too that ſentiments thus imbibed and eſtabliſhed are cheriſhed with peculiar fondneſs, and defended with peculiar zeal. We do not conſider them as queſtionable in point of truth themſelves, but rather as the ſtandard by which other truths are to be tried; they are the firſt we have received, and the laſt we are willing to loſe.

Nor can this be avoided, while mankind continue to be what they are. The human mind will unavoidably contract the ſtrongeſt attachment to thoſe objects, with which it is the moſt early and the moſt permanently familiar. Truth itſelf cannot eaſily be taught, without being recommended by the teacher; and opinions muſt be recommended in order to be taught. Nor can the requiſite ſkill or expertneſs in the common tranſactions of life be acquired without fixing ſuch habits, as it will afterwards be both inconvenient

venient and painful to exchange. By what means all theſe prejudices may be removed, without eſtabliſhing others in their place, or reducing the mind to the vacancy of childhood: by what arts the affections may be prevailed upon to remain in a ſtate of neutrality, till the underſtanding has determined to what objects they ſhall be directed; by what power, excluſive of thoſe affections, the underſtanding itſelf may be ſtimulated to conſider the merits of any objects at all; and by what means and at what period this underſtanding ſhall be competent to examine and decide upon every ſubject that may concern our virtue or our happineſs; theſe are points which the writer confeſſes himſelf as unable to determine, as he is unwilling that the attempt ſhould be made. And he is unwilling the attempt ſhould be made, becauſe it does not appear, that, if ſucceſsful, it would be beneficial in its effects. The removal of all our prejudices, were it poſſible, would impair

impair or deſtroy many of the beſt affections of the heart, and not a few of the beſt virtues in our conduct.

That our earlieſt attachments are founded, above all others, upon accident and prepoſſeſſion, and at the ſame time that they are, above all others, pleaſing to the human mind, the ſources of many of the pureſt and moſt delightful of our ſenſations, every man readily confeſſes; and what adequate advantage is to be obtained by the extinction of theſe attachments, and the ſubſtitution of the modern notions of liberality and benevolence in their place, it is the buſineſs of the enemies of prejudice to explain.

That a great majority of mankind muſt always remain in ſuch ignorance, as to be governed in their opinions and conduct more by the authority of others than by their own judgment, by habit rather than conviction, no man of any experience in the world will diſpute. Nor will he fail to obſerve that prejudices

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in the minds of ſuch men may be changed, but cannot be aboliſhed; that if the principles they firſt adopted, be once looſened or eraſed, they are generally either replaced by ſuch as are weaker or more wicked, or ſucceeded by the loſs of all moral and religious principle whatever. To think and reaſon wholly for themſelves neither the information nor the leiſure of men in general will permit; and what may be expected from attempts to *enlighten the people*, the efforts of our modern demagogues have too plainly ſhewn. It is what no wiſe or good man will wiſh to ſee repeated.

That reciprocal attachment or eſteem, which conſtitutes friendſhip, undoubtedly takes its riſe in ſome degree from prejudice. The follies and vices of my friend are probably not leſs, nor his talents and merits greater, than thoſe of the friends of other men. Yet our mutual regard, however founded in partiality and error, contributes always to our happineſs, and gene-

generally to our virtue; it augments our enjoyments as individuals, and our utility as members of the community. He who would ſacrifice the pleaſures and advantages of friendſhip at the ſhrine of *philoſophiſm* and its philanthropy, would ſacrifice to a name and a ſhadow, what the frailties of our nature have made neceſſary; what human wiſdom has always applauded; and what divine revelation itſelf has not condemned.

Whatever is true of the eſteem of friendſhip is ſtill more true of the paſſion of love, with reſpect to its origin, as well as its effects. And though this paſſion in its exceſſes and abſurdities will ſometimes excite the contempt of the philoſopher or the ſneer of the ſatiriſt; yet will it, under the guidance of prudence and virtue, continue to be the foundation and ſupport of ſociety; and to conſtitute no inconſiderable proportion of the little happineſs which human life admits.

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If patriotiſm be allowed to be a virtue, it muſt be allowed alſo that this virtue has its foundation in habit and prepoſſeſſion. The predilection, which we feel for our own country, is not founded upon the ſuperiority of its phyſical advantages in compariſon with thoſe of other regions; upon the ſalubrity of the climate, or the fertility of the ſoil; upon its convenience for commerce, or its opportunities for attack or defence. On the contrary, indeed, this predilection ſeems rather to be encreaſed, in proportion as theſe benefits have been denied. Where a mountainous diſtrict prevents much intercourſe with other nations; where ſubſiſtence is difficult to be procured; where a barren ſoil and an ungenial climate render the conſtant exertions of the inhabitants neceſſary for their ſupport; and their union and vigilance for the common defence; there it is that we find the ſtrongeſt attachment to what appears leaſt to deſerve it; and for this obvious reaſon,

reaſon, that it has required and engaged the largeſt ſhare of their attention, and found the fulleſt employment for their faculties. Regions every way more favoured by nature than thoſe of North Britain and Switzerland may eaſily be named. But the national attachment of the Swiſs and the Scotch to their reſpective countries has never been exceeded. On our native ſoil are found thoſe objects on which accident firſt beſtowed, and cuſtom has confirmed, our affections. That attachment which we feel for the place where we ſpent the cheerful hours of infancy; for thoſe, who are endeared to us by the ties of conſanguinity, or the familiarities of friendſhip; for thoſe to whom we are united by ſimilarity of ſentiments and purſuits, by the ſame laws, language, and religion; this is gradually extended and matured into the love of our country and our countrymen; into that zeal for their intereſts and ſpirit in their defence, which men in all ages and nations have

have been taught to cultivate, and have agreed to applaud.

He that calls himſelf a citizen of the world, has generally more affectation than humanity; and proclaims, not ſo much the liberality of his mind, as the inſenſibility of his heart. The whole human race is too large an object for the graſp of our affections, and too widely diffuſed to be much influenced by our actions. The diſciple of modern philoſophy, indeed, while he pretends to univerſal philanthropy, neglects the practical duties within his reach. He affects compaſſion for the miſeries of the ſavages of diſtant regions; but it is only the diſguiſe of his want of tenderneſs for his fellow-citizens at home. He can behold, with unconcern, pain, injuſtice and cruelty inflicted upon his friends or his country, under the fallacious pretext that ſuch ſuffering is ſubſervient to general good, and contributes to the liberty or the happineſs of mankind. Till however, all enmity between

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rival nations ſhall ceaſe; till the duties of humanity ſhall be practiſed towards all our fellow-creatures without diſtinction; till partiality and affection ſhall neither exiſt nor be wanted; till that wild theory, in ſhort, ſhall be realized upon earth, which ſuppoſes that human nature may be made perfect or made anew; till theſe wonderful changes in the ſtate of ſociety ſhall have been effected, the love of our own country, in preference to others, will continue to be an uſeful and honourable principle of action, the ſource of many of our beſt enjoyments, and the foundation of many of our beſt virtues.

Let not the reader diſdainfully reject the doctrine, till he has given it a fair hearing, when it is aſſerted, that what is called natural affection itſelf, is in a great meaſure the affection of habit, and therefore of prejudice. The exiſtence of the inſtinct is not denied. But of the ſtrong attachment of parents to their offspring, it ſeems to be only one cauſe amongſt many;

many; and that not the principal or the moſt powerful. Till ſtrengthened and confirmed by habit it is eaſily oppoſed or deſtroyed. The loſs of an infant is much leſs lamented than the loſs of a child more advanced in age. Our own children do not poſſeſs beauty or merit ſuperior to the children of others; but we love them with greater intenſeneſs, becauſe they have engaged a larger ſhare of our time and attention. The ſame principle, indeed, will ſatisfactorily account for what has often occaſioned both ſurpriſe and cenſure; that the child moſt afflicted with ſickneſs or deformity, or the moſt perverſe and vicious of a numerous family, generally enjoys more than his proportion in the affection of the parent. What is moſt frequently in our thoughts acquires at laſt the greateſt intereſt in our hearts. Between the infant and the nurſe will often grow an attachment little leſs forcible and permanent, than between the infant and the parent;

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laſts; and by its laſting only while neceſſary for the ſupport and ſafety of the young. As ſoon as they are able to provide for their own ſubſiſtence, the parent is generally obſerved to drive them away. In the human ſpecies the influence of inſtinct and of habit are greatly aſſiſted and augmented by the ſuggeſtions of reaſon and reflection; by our conſciouſneſs beforehand, that affection and care for our offspring are not more the dictate of nature than of moral duty; and by the hopes we entertain that this care and this attention will find their reward in the gratitude, the virtue, and the happineſs of their object.

That a large proportion of prejudice, however, enters into the mutual attachment between the parent and the offſpring is not inſiſted on with a view to cenſure, but to defend it; to ſhew that there are prejudices which even modern philoſophy will not eaſily find reaſon to condemn. In the parent the affection

for his child is not only the ſource of many of his pureſt and greateſt pleaſures, but the principal motive on which he diſcharges with zeal and delight ſome of his moſt irkſome and important duties. In the child the affection for his parents is not only the foundation of all the beſt and tendereſt affections of the heart, but the beginning and the principle of ſubmiſſion without reluctance to external authority, of ready deference to the opinions and inclinations of others, and of cheerful obedience to the laws of the ſociety in which providence has placed him.

Amongſt what have been called the prejudices of education muſt not be forgotten the momentous concern of religion. By the infidel and the ſceptick all ſentiments of piety and devotion have been ridiculed or cenſured, as the mere effects of inſtruction and cuſtom operating upon fear and folly; and the preference which the natives of one country give

give to their own ſyſtem of faith and worſhip, is often ſtigmatized, by the inhabitants of other regions and the profeſſors of other doctrines, as the reſult of ſuperſtition, bigotry, and prejudice. The evidences for the truth of the Chriſtian revelation it is foreign to the preſent purpoſe to repeat; and how far it is juſt and neceſſary to inſtruct the riſing generation in the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, another opportunity will be found to examine more at large. For the preſent, however, let it be obſerved, that to leave to each individual the choice of his religion, as recommended in the reveries of Rouſſeau, and therefore to leave him without any religion at all, till his age and learning have qualified him to make the choice, is a mode of proceeding, of which the abſurdity ſeems equalled only by the danger. A ſmall proportion of mankind only have leiſure and abilities ſufficient to enable them to compare with

each other the different ſyſtems of doctrine and worſhip, that have been eſtabliſhed in the world; a ſtill ſmaller have talents and inclination to form their own creed from their own obſervation and reflection; and that perhaps would be the ſmalleſt of all, which would admit any impreſſions of piety upon their minds, if already preoccupied with the paſſions of our nature and the buſineſs of the world. Nor could there upon this ſuppoſition be any proſpect of attaining ſuch concord and unanimity, ſuch uniformity in the articles of faith and rites of devotion, as have always been deemed neceſſary to produce the due influence of religion, and to ſupport the beſt intereſts of the community. That man ſhould in every thing be formed or improved by his habits was obviouſly the intention of his creator. And is that only to be left without the advantages of habit, which is the only firm foundation of the virtue

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of the individual and of the peace of ſociety; and on which depends the happineſs of time and of eternity! Habit only will enable us to perform what our duty and our intereſt equally require: to regulate every ſentiment of the heart by the will of God; to refer every action of life to his commands; and to hope from his promiſes the final reward of our obedience.

Inſtances to the ſame purpoſe might be multiplied to almoſt any extent. But a ſufficient number has been adduced to ſhew how unfounded in many caſes are the clamours of our opponents, and our own apprehenſions, on the ſubject of the prejudices of education. They are often innocent in themſelves, neceſſary to the weakneſs of our nature, and beneficial in their effects. An education without prejudices is, indeed, a notion dictated by the true ſpirit of *philoſophiſm*, and expreſſed in its own jargon; for it is in practice an

impoſſibility, and in terms, little leſs than a contradiction *.

Let me not, however, be miſunderſtood. My deſign in making theſe obſervations is not by any means to palliate or encourage thoſe mean and contemptible prejudices, which at once narrow the mind, and harden the heart; but to re-

* The abolition of all prejudice ſeems to be the oppoſite extreme to what is ſometimes maintained by the ſame deſcription of theoriſts, the doctrine of philoſophical neceſſity. In the former inſtance they require the underſtanding alone to direct independently of the affections; and in the latter they maintain that the underſtanding itſelf is irreſiſtibly directed by circumſtances and motives; and therefore in no ſmall degree by the affections and paſſions. It would, no doubt, be conſidered as a favour by the publick, if each of theſe philoſophers could inform us, when we are, and when we are not, to believe him to be in earneſt; that is, according to the diſtinction of Cicero, when he ſpeaks with ſincerity as a candid enquirer after truth, and when, in the capacity of an orator, he only pleads the cauſe of his hypotheſis or his party.

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commend it to parents and preceptors to eſtabliſh in their children and pupils, by inſtruction, diſcipline and habit, firmneſs of principle and conſiſtency of character. It is certainly not deſirable to prevent the correction of error or the diffuſion of knowledge. But it is ſtill leſs deſirable to offer ſuch information as is unſuitable at once to the capacity and the ſituation of thoſe to whom it is offered, to unſettle thoſe motives of action, which experience has ſhewn are alone able to ſupport the integrity of the individual and the peace of the community; or to propagate ſuch doctrines, as the ſtate of the world and the influence of our paſſions will not permit us to carry into effect. The deſign here is, not to prevent the due exerciſe of reaſon, or to reſtrain the ſpirit of liberal enquiry; but to cenſure that wild and unſhackled freedom of thought, which diſregards, or affects to diſregard, all the influence of cuſtom, all reſpect for ancient uſage, and all the wiſdom of former

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times; and which presumptuously decides upon all subjects of policy or morals, by lights entirely its own, without reference to the nature of man, or the frame of civil society, to acknowledged principles, or established practice. The design is, not to encourage that bigotry of opinion, which denies all wisdom to those who dissent from us, and all merit to the natives of other countries; but to censure that laxity and indifference, which disguise their own deformity and spread their poison under the specious names of candour, liberality, and moderation. The design is, not to recommend undue warmth in our attachments or aversions, even towards their proper objects, and in the cause of virtue; but to condemn that unnatural and criminal apathy, which can be awakened to action or to pleasure only by such scenes of turpitude and horror, as shock the feelings and the understandings of all the rest of mankind. The design is, not to confine the affections,

tions, or limit the duties of humanity to a family, a ſect, or a climate; but to ſtigmatize that romantick affectation of univerſal philanthropy, which has been found to conceal the moſt culpable inſenſibility, and to terminate in the moſt deſpicate ſelfiſhneſs. The deſign is, in ſhort, to place man in that point of view, in which his creator ſeems to have intended he ſhould appear; as the creature of education and habit; as reſponſible alike for the acquiſition and the exerciſe of knowledge; for the religious and moral principles, which he may form, and for their effects upon his conduct, in whatever ſituation the wiſdom of providence may ſee fit to place him.

I have dwelt the longer on this ſubject, becauſe it is peculiarly liable to miſtake and miſapprehenſion; becauſe, if the remarks that have been made appear to be juſt, they ſhew in a ſtill ſtronger light the importance and the neceſſity of a right

education; and becaufe the force of much of my future reafoning will depend upon the truth of what has been now advanced.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

On the Diſcipline and Inſtruction of Infants.

WITH the care and management of infants a ſyſtem of literary and moral education may not appear to have any immediate connection. But the former has a material influence upon the latter; and, indeed, upon the whole of their future conduct and welfare in the world. Right habits cannot be too ſoon begun; and in what degree the faculties as well as the diſpoſitions of youth are affected by the treatment they receive in their infancy, thoſe only, who have paid diligent attention to the ſubject, will eaſily underſtand or credit. But he, who is convinced how much both of the virtue and the happineſs of life depend upon the earlieſt diſcipline of the mind, will conſider

conſider the temper and manners of a child as objects of very ſerious concern. Our education, as Rouſſeau has juſtly remarked, begins with our exiſtence, and our firſt teacher is the nurſe. To education may very juſtly be applied the obſervation of the artiſt upon his picture, that not a little of its ultimate excellence depends upon the firſt ſketches being pencilled with truth.

The phyſical education of children it is the buſineſs of a different profeſſion to direct. I ſhall no further interfere with it, than by incidental and occaſional notice, where it ſeems materially to affect their moral and literary improvement; and on the latter point, indeed, almoſt all eſſential regulations may be included in one general principle. Let the infant be taught ſubmiſſion to the authority of his parents, as ſoon as his intellect allows him to underſtand the meaning of a command; and let this ſubmiſſion be invariably enforced. I am aware of the difficulty

culty of the taſk, which the ſtrict obſervance of this rule will require from the parent; the ſeverity of the trial, to which his tenderneſs may be frequently expoſed. But parental duties have never been conſidered as eaſy; and the reward is ſurely equal to the toil; the immediate improvement and future happineſs of his offspring. Submiſſion, indeed, becomes by habit neither difficult nor painful to our ſons; and I may appeal to the experience of every reader, whether he has not obſerved, that well-regulated children enjoy more ſatisfaction from acting in obedience to the wiſhes of their parents, than the perverſe and froward ever could receive from the moſt promiſing and pleaſurable tranſgreſſion. The youth too muſt at ſome time be taught, or be compelled, to bend his own inclinations in compliance with the inclinations of others; for though he may govern the family at home, he cannot afterwards govern all his connections in the world.

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This compliance will give him no pain, if begun in early life. But it will occaſion exquiſite miſery, if neglected, till the indulgence of his own humour is ripened into habit, and conſidered as an eſtabliſhed right. The weeds of the intellectual, as well as of the natural ſoil, may be moſt eaſily and effectually eradicated before they have attained the ſtrength and firmneſs of maturity.

The deciſive argument, however, for governing a child by authority is the impoſſibility of governing him by any other means. His imagination is luxuriant, and his ſpirits impetuous; his underſtanding is yet weak, and his experience almoſt nothing. Where then, but in parental influence, ſhall we find any ſufficient reſtraint upon his appetites and his conduct! To attempt to manage him by reaſon, as ſome modern theoriſts have recommended, is beginning where we ought to finiſh. Reaſon is the laſt of our faculties, which attains to its matu-

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rity; or rather it is the maturity of all our faculties together. It is the end at which we aim in education, not the means by which we purſue it. You may with as much propriety, ſays Rouſſeau, require your ſon to be ſix feet high, as to poſſeſs judgment, at ten years of age. We muſt not expect to gather the fruits of autumn while we are contemplating the bloſſoms and beauties of the ſpring.

The general reward of good behaviour ſhould be the approbation and careſſes of his parents; and the general puniſhment of perverſeneſs or diſobedience excluſion from their preſence, or confinement from play, for a length of time proportioned to the nature and circumſtances of the tranſgreſſion. The penalty may always be mitigated at diſcretion, where unequivocal marks of penitence appear, or due ſubmiſſion has been made. During the years of infancy much perſonal correction cannot be recommended; nor can it perhaps be wholly excluded. The authority

rity of the parents muſt at all events be enforced. To diſpute it muſt always be conſidered as a heavy aggravation of the firſt offence; and whenever perſonal chaſtiſement has been threatened for any tranſgreſſion, if the tranſgreſſion be committed, the chaſtiſement muſt invariably be inflicted. Whether of indulgence or ſeverity, reward or puniſhment, no promiſe to a child ever ſhould be broken. No violation of known rules, and ſtill more, no offence implying malignity of heart, ſhould be ſuffered to paſs without its proper correction. Impunity will only encourage a repetition of the offence, and habit will harden malignity. When the Athenian mother urged that the fault of her ſon was but a ſmall matter, Solon replied, that cuſtom was a great one. This ſteady uniformity, however, will render perſonal chaſtiſement in a great degree unneceſſary. Where puniſhment is certain, tranſgreſſion is never frequent.

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When the child is ſmarting under the pain or ſhame of chaſtiſement, let him not be ſuffered to ſeek conſolation in the kitchen; to forget in the miſtaken kindneſs of ſervants that ſuffering, the utility of which can only be in proportion to the time it is remembered. But above all, on no occaſion and on no account whatever ſhould one parent interfere with the diſcipline of the other. The careſſes of the mother, muſt never alleviate the ſeverity, or diſappoint the effects, of the correction inflicted by the father. Such conduct ſhould indeed be ſtigmatized with every reproach, which weakneſs and folly can deſerve. Not to mention, that it frequently produces diſpute and diſſention between the parents themſelves, and a ſyſtem of partiality and *favouritiſm* in the management of their offspring; it will ſoon teach the children to deſpiſe the authority of both; to conſider all chaſtiſement as tyranny and cruelty; to play off parent againſt parent; and to venture on

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diſobedience to the one, in the confidence that the tenderneſs of the other will ſave them from puniſhment. In thoſe artifices, which the weak fondneſs of parents encourages their children to practiſe againſt them, may often be traced the firſt ſeeds of that cunning and diſſimulation, fraud and vice; of which the ſubſequent fruit covers ſo many characters with miſery and ſhame. When the child has once learnt, and when it is practicable, he always learns it very early, that his tears will purchaſe careſſes; and that he can obtain whatever he deſires, by appearing unhappy from the want of it; that child has obtained an authority, which it will afterwards be painful to all parties to reſtrain; his heart has imbibed a corruption, which it will be difficult, and perhaps impoſſible, wholly to eradicate. I have often ſeen the heir of a family its maſter, before he had compleated the ſecond year of his age; and as often lamented that folly in his treatment,

ment, which ſeldom fails to be puniſhed by the diſappointment of the parent, and the vice and miſery of the offspring.

The wants of nature muſt, indeed, be conſtantly diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of fancy: the former, it is obvious, ſhould be diligently ſupplied; but the latter generally diſregarded or diſcouraged. I certainly would not give unneceſſary pain to a child by frequent and capricious refuſals in points of trifling moment. But a denial once made ſhould never be revoked; and the repetition of a requeſt, after ſuch denial, ſhould always diſappoint its own purpoſe. To attempt to gratify all the deſires of a child is, indeed, as abſurd in itſelf as injurious to him. Thoſe deſires will always multiply in proportion to the frequency and facility of gratification, till compliance becomes impoſſible. Grant to your ſon's requeſt, again obſerves Rouſſeau, firſt your cane, and then your watch; and he will ſoon require you to procure for him the birds from the air,

air, and the ſtars from the firmament. As indulgence muſt ſomewhere ſtop, let it ſtop in the firſt inſtance at the point which the judgment of the parents ſhall approve. To give becauſe he ſolicits, is to encourage him to be troubleſome and importunate; to refuſe what ought to be refuſed, is to teach him at once the great principle of human duty, the ſuppreſſion of improper deſire. That man ſhould continue longer than other animals in the helpleſſneſs and dependence of infancy, ſeems to have been ordained for this reaſon amongſt others, that time might be allowed, while both mind and body are yet yielding and flexible, to regulate his temper, and form his habits. The direction given at the ſource will conduct the ſtream to almoſt any point; and let not parents complain, when too late, that thoſe waters are noxious, which their own folly poiſoned at the ſource.

The object next in importance, in the management of a child, is his introduc-

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tion to literature. He ſhould be taught to read as ſoon as his organs will permit; becauſe it will both improve his faculties more rapidly, and give him early and valuable habits of application. His leſſons ſhould be frequent and regular, both becauſe he will be apt to forget after any long interval what he had been taught before; and becauſe this regularity will ſtamp the value and the neceſſity of learning upon his mind. For the ſame reaſon no engagement of pleaſure ſhould be ſuffered to prevent the leſſon; no recreation allowed till it is performed. His diligence in theſe leſſons ſhould be rewarded, or his negligence puniſhed, by the ſame means as his good or ill behaviour in general, by commendation and careſſes, or by reproof and correction, from his parents. Here too, as in all other caſes, the parent muſt not ſuffer his commands to be diſobeyed, or diſputed. The taſk appointed muſt invariably be required at his hands. It will reſt with the diſcretion

of the teacher to appoint ſuch only as he knows his pupil able to perform.

That learning ſhould be repreſented to children as merely play and pleaſure; or that play and pleaſure ſhould be made the general vehicle of inſtruction, is a ſyſtem, which cannot, I think, be ſafely recommended. No deception ever ſhould be practiſed with children. It is equally mean and miſchievous. It muſt at ſome time be detected. They will then probably deſpiſe the teacher, who was the author of it, and deteſt the leſſon, which was the inſtrument. Nor is the ſyſtem without future danger to morals. Where pleaſure is repreſented as the general aim of his ſtudies, it naturally tends to render the youth luxurious and ſelfiſh; and inſtances of deception practiſed upon himſelf muſt diminiſh or deſtroy his eſtimation of ſincerity and truth. Play ſhould be permitted as the reward of diligence; and the future advantages of literature may be promiſed as incentives to application.

cation. But with infants, who do not underſtand, and will not liſten to argument, command is the only efficacious obligation. The authority over them, indeed, ſhould certainly be exerciſed with diſcretion; as it is in its nature and principle arbitrary and deſpotick.

No taſk ſo tedious or difficult, however, ſhould ever be required from a child; no puniſhment of ſuch duration or ſeverity ſhould ever be inflicted upon him, as may permanently depreſs his ſpirits, deſtroy his reliſh for his uſual amuſements, or in any degree affect his health. The former may be uſeful and valuable objects; but the latter are indiſpenſibly neceſſary. This caution, however, will probably be deemed ſuperfluous. No ordinary rigour can materially injure a child; and in theſe days there is no reaſon to fear that too much will be exerted.

If it be enquired, who ſhould be ſelected to teach the rudiments of learning to infants, there can be no heſitation in

pronouncing, that the mother is, in the firſt inſtance, the moſt eligible inſtructor. She may with the moſt propriety be truſted with the requiſite authority; becauſe ſhe will naturally exerciſe it with the greateſt tenderneſs; and ſhe may reaſonably be expected to diſcharge the taſk with the greateſt diligence, becauſe ſhe is the moſt intereſted in its ſucceſs. I am not ſo viſionary, as to ſuppoſe with Locke, that a mother, who does not herſelf underſtand the language, may yet contrive to teach latin to her ſon. But for the rudiments of her native tongue ſo ſuitable an inſtructor certainly cannot elſewhere be found. That ſo few parents are diſpoſed to become preceptors to their own children, or to pay due attention to the office when undertaken, has been frequently, and cannot be too deeply, lamented. But when we obſerve the general diſſipation of the age, that inſatiate thirſt of pleaſure, which has ſeized all ranks of the community, we cannot wonder

der at their averſion to irkſome employment and domeſtick drudgery. In anſwer to an enquiry after the health of her infant children, I once heard a lady at the card table requeſt, with evident marks of impatience, not to be reminded of her misfortunes. That diſſipation might interrupt common cares, and diminiſh the exerciſe of ordinary virtues was always ſuppoſed; but when we ſee it undermining maternal affection itſelf, it excites equal ſorrow and indignation.

Though I have given the preference to the mother as the teacher of the rudiments of language to her children, I would by no means exclude the father from the office; if his inclination lead him to undertake it, and his other avocations allow him to diſchage its duties with ſufficient ſteadineſs and regularity. But I can aſſign him only the ſecond place in point of propriety, as the preceptor of his infant offspring; becauſe I think he would obtain only the ſecond

degree of ſucceſs. Even where the engagements of buſineſs or a profeſſion, where publick or private affairs require the principal ſhare of his time and attention, he may ſtill contribute greatly to the improvement of his children by his occaſional aſſiſtance and co-operation. He may periodically enquire and examine what progreſs has been made: he may, as often as his convenience will permit, enforce the leſſons of the mother by his preſence, and he ought upon all occaſions to ſanction her precepts by his authority. I know not whether examples ſo antiquated will have any weight with parents in our own times; but I cannot deny myſelf the ſatisfaction of reminding them, that Auguſtus delighted to inſtruct his grand children in the elements of ſcience, and that Cato the cenſor would ſuffer none but himſelf to be the teacher of grammar to his ſon.

Where the parents, for whatever reaſon, decline the taſk of inſtructing their own

own children, the next eligible character is a prudent and reſpectable governeſs. To common ſervants there are various and unanſwerable objections. In order to encourage the child to imitation, and to tempt him to ſpeak the more early, they are apt to practiſe before him an imperfect articulation; and thus teach him, what he muſt afterwards be at great pains to unlearn; and what it has ſometimes been found impoſſible to correct. In order to ſupport their authority over him, it is cuſtomary to fill his mind, and to alarm his fears, with a thouſand extravagant notions of the power and agency of ſpectres and ſpirits; of which he cannot perceive the abſurdity or detect the falſehood; and theſe have often made ſuch an impreſſion upon the imagination, as the utmoſt efforts of reaſon could not afterwards without difficulty remove. It may appear ludicrous to others, but it is a ſerious misfortune to the individuals, that men are often found, who from the

effects of theſe early terrors are ſtill afraid to be left alone in the darkneſs of the night. Nor is this the whole or the worſt of the miſchief. Boys left too much with ſervants are uſually careſſed and flattered into inſolence and perverſeneſs. They almoſt inevitably contract an attachment to vulgar manners: and not ſeldom to vulgar vices too. To hear the child liſp the obſcenity and blaſphemy, which themſelves have taught him, conſtitutes not unfrequently the amuſement of the company in the kitchen.

I have recommended a governeſs for ſeveral reaſons in preference to a maſter. The difference in the expence is not unworthy of attention. With the office of a teacher I would unite ſome of the duties of a nurſe. Men of talents are ſeldom willing to undertake the taſk of inſtructing infants, and ſtill more ſeldom perform it well. A female treats children with more tenderneſs; and preſerves her influence over them with more dexterity

and ſucceſs. But whoever be the preceptor, his authority ſhould be invariably ſupported by the parent: and the nearer approaches can be made to the order and diſcipline of a ſchool, the more regular the diſtribution of time between buſineſs and amuſement, between books and playthings, the more effectually will the immediate improvement of the child be promoted, and thoſe habits eſtabliſhed, to which in the future purſuit of ſcience he will find it neceſſary to adhere.

Should this ſcheme alſo of domeſtick education, during the years of infancy, be for any reaſon diſapproved, or found impracticable; I would in the next place recommend what has uſually been called a preparatory ſchool. In the neighbourhood of the metropolis, and no doubt in other parts of the kingdom, many ladies of equal tenderneſs and judgment receive into their houſes a ſmall number of boys from infancy till eight or ten years of age; where to the cares of the nurſery

are added the rudiments of language and ſcience, and thoſe ſcholaſtick habits, which when begun early and ſteadily continued, are as pleaſing as they are beneficial. The ſyſtem of theſe ſchools carries with it its own recommendation at firſt ſight, and is known to be truly valuable by its ſucceſs.

It is hardly neceſſary to obſerve that wherever any compariſon is made between different ſyſtems of education, or one mode of proceeding recommended in preference to another, it is always ſuppoſed to be addreſſed to men, whoſe circumſtances enable them to make an option, and purſue their own judgment. It were idle to recommend that to a man, which his fortune did not permit him to purchaſe. The poor man, before he takes my advice, muſt conſult his purſe, as well as his underſtanding.

At what age a boy ſhould be ſent to the ſchool, where he is to obtain, or as it is uſually expreſſed, to finiſh his education,

tion, though it is a queſtion of ſome importance, cannot eaſily be fixed with preciſion. Different boys at the ſame age poſſeſs very different degrees of health, ſtrength and faculties: and theſe determine the proper ſeaſon of his being placed at ſchool better than his years. It may however be laid down as a general rule, that he ſhould be fixed at the intended place of his education, as ſoon as he can read his own language with tolerable fluency: and this will generally be the caſe by the time that he has attained his ſixth or ſeventh year. I do not adviſe his being ſent more early; becauſe in a numerous ſchool, and theſe are moſt to be recommended, the firſt rudiments are in danger of being neglected; they require more time than the teachers can uſually ſpare from leſſons, which they are more willing to give; and the child's acquiſition of his alphabet is too often left to ſuch attention and aſſiſtance, as the ſenior ſcholars are diſpoſed to beſtow. But in

favour of the period aſſigned various and important reaſons may be urged. How deſireable it is that the habits and diſcipline of a ſchool ſhould commence in early life, is an obſervation, which there is continual occaſion to repeat. As ſoon as a decent progreſs is made in his own language, the youth ſhould enter upon writing, arithmetick, or his accidence, under the inſtructors with whom he is afterwards to remain. A boy amongſt other boys enjoys the moſt ſatisfaction, makes the greateſt progreſs in his ſtudies, and acquires the manners moſt ſuitable to his age and ſtation. In a ſchool of reputation he will be moſt effectually guarded againſt thoſe habits of faulty pronunciation, againſt thoſe vulgar and offenſive tones in reading and ſpeaking, which it is afterwards ſo contemptible to retain, and ſo difficult to correct. Above all, beginning his education in the ſeminary where it is to be finiſhed, he will enter at once upon the mode in which he is to con-

continue. He will at firſt learn the rules which are to conduct him to the end. The ſame grammar, which introduces him to a language, will guide him through it. And that the acquiſition of knowledge ſhould be greatly facilitated by uniformity in the plan was not more reaſonably to be expected beforehand, from the nature of ſcience and of the human mind, than has been deciſively proved by the experience and the teſtimony, as well of the teachers, who have undertaken to give inſtrnction, as of the ſtudents, who have had reaſon to lament the inconvenience of change.

It is, however, frequently taken for granted by parents that an inferior ſchool is the moſt eligible for the early part of the education of their ſons. Men of humble talents are believed to be the moſt willing to labour diligently in teaching the rudiments of literature to children; while preceptors of ſuperior learning are ſuppoſed to be either leſs able to accom-

modate their lectures to the youthful capacities, or leſs patient of the drudgery of perpetually repeating the elements of art and ſcience. In this country therefore one ſeminary is often choſen to begin, and another to finiſh, our ſchool education: it being generally and juſtly preſumed that in each the talents of the different teachers are in their reſpective departments proportioned to the learning of the principal maſter; that he employs aſſiſtants duly qualified to ſecond his views, and to carry his plans into effect. That men far advanced in any ſcience are not always diſpoſed to teach its rudiments to children, will be readily admitted; but we are here ſpeaking of ſuch only as have actually undertaken the office, or are willing to undertake it; and with reſpect to theſe, the opinion of the parents appears to me erroneous in its principle, and the practice founded upon it prejudicial to their offspring. Some reaſons to this purpoſe have already been aſſigned;

aſſigned; and more might eaſily be added. Teachers of inferior qualifications always do ſomething wrong. When the youth therefore is at length placed under a maſter of ability, much time is loſt to himſelf, and much trouble occaſioned to his inſtructor, in correcting the errors already imbibed, and the faulty habits, that have been contracted. Timotheus, the celebrated muſician of antiquity, is ſaid to have doubled the price of his leſſons to all ſuch pupils as had been previouſly inſtructed in the art by any inferior teacher. And every ſchoolmaſter of eminence has reaſon to wiſh that a ſimilar practice could be extended to ſome of the branches of modern education. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that he, who is the moſt compleatly maſter of any ſcience, muſt know beſt by what means it may be the moſt eaſily and the moſt effectually obtained. His own ideas are the cleareſt; and may therefore be rendered the moſt intelligible to his pupils: and experience will

will warrant us in aſſerting that he who thoroughly underſtands his ſubject, will the moſt expeditiouſly and the moſt correctly teach it to others, in all its various parts, as well in its moſt ſimple elements, as in its ſublimeſt theories or moſt complicated demonſtrations. The judgment of Philip of Macedon has been a thouſand times applauded, who had his ſon Alexander inſtructed from his earlieſt years by Ariſtotle himſelf. To ſuppoſe indeed that the ableſt maſters cannot moſt ſucceſsfully inſtruct their pupils in the rudiments of their reſpective ſciences, is not leſs abſurd than to ſuppoſe, according to the illuſtration of the great teacher of rhetorick at Rome, that Phidias could not execute the drapery of his own ſtatue; or that a phyſician of ſuperior talents cannot cure an ordinary diſeaſe.

If the length or the minuteneſs of theſe obſervations be thought to require an apology, let it be remembered that ſucceſs in every purſuit depends in a great degree upon

upon beginning well; and in none more than in the momentous buſineſs of education. Learning muſt have its infancy and its cradle; and without appropriate treatment will never attain to maturity or excellence. The voice of the moſt eloquent orator, ſays Quinctilian, was once an inarticulate ſound.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

On the comparative Advantages of publick and private Education.

TO determine upon what ſyſtem the riſing generation may be inſtructed with the greateſt convenience and effect; by what meaſures in early youth his offſpring may be moſt ſucceſsfully trained to learning and virtue, is a point of the utmoſt importance to a parent, and hardly leſs difficult than important. The enquiry is, indeed, both complicated and extenſive; influenced by various and weighty conſiderations; and particularly by what the ſubject naturally ſuggeſts, the comparative advantages of publick or private education.

This queſtion has, indeed, been frequently agitated; not only with ſuch deliberation and diligence, as its importance

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ſeemed to require; but ſometimes with ſuch zeal and acrimony, as were prompted by the private intereſt of the diſputants, or the jealouſy of rival talents. It appears to me, however, that it can hardly be a general queſtion at all; at leaſt, that it does not admit any general deciſion. But it was diſcuſſed by Quinctilian more than ſeventeen centuries ago; and has been ſince adverted to by almoſt every writer on the ſubject of education. Though it may not be determined, therefore, it muſt not be wholly neglected

Quinctilian will not be ſuſpected of waſting his reader's time or his own, in diſquiſitions foreign to his purpoſe; and in his treatiſe, indeed, the enquiry was not only natural but unavoidable. His ſyſtem of education had but one object in view, to form the youth of his own nation to excellence in the oratory of the bar, or the ſenate; and it was both rational and neceſſary to conſider by what means that excellence might be moſt ſucceſsfully

fully attained. In this country the objects of education are not only numerous and varied, but ſometimes incompatible with each other; and its plans and purſuits, therefore, cannot always be the ſame. The queſtion evidently becomes different, as it regards every different ſtudent; and muſt be determined with reſpect to each, not ſo much by the comparative advantages of general ſyſtems abſtractedly conſidered; as by what is moſt ſuitable to the individual concerned; to his rank, his health, his capacity, and his future deſtination. If the youth be deſigned for any active ſtation in publick life; for the bar or the ſenate; for the practice of medicine, or for the profeſſion of arms; I have no heſitation in giving it as my opinion that he ought to have a publick education. And by a publick education, I mean an education at one of thoſe ſchools univerſally known amongſt us by the denomination of publick ſchools; at one of the larger of thoſe endowed

dowed ſchools, which are eſtabliſhed in every conſiderable town, and almoſt in every diſtrict of the kingdom; or at one of thoſe academies, where the number of pupils is not limited, and where the diſcipline approaches to the model, and poſſeſſes ſome of the vigour, of our publick ſchools.

The objections to this ſyſtem of education ſtated by Quinctilian, and which, indeed, comprize the ſtrongeſt objections that have been yet urged againſt it, conſiſt wholly in the danger, either that the morals of the pupil will be corrupted by the corruption of his fellows; or that his improvement will be neglected in the confuſion naturally incident to numbers.

Were the former of theſe objections well founded, it ought certainly to be deciſive. The purity of morals muſt not be ſacrificed to the acquiſition of learning. But fortunately this dreaded corruption is far from certain. The danger of it is not greater, perhaps, than in other ſituations; and

and at leaſt, if publick ſchools furniſh the bane of morals, in them too the moſt powerful antidotes may be found. I ſhall give the reſult of my own experience and obſervation without diſguiſe; not certainly becauſe this reſult offers any novelty; but becauſe it has been called in queſtion. The truth in this caſe, as in many others, does not require ſo much to be diſcovered or proved, as to be publiſhed and enforced.

The common notion, that boys corrupt each other, is not, I think, juſt to the extent generally ſuppoſed. Its riſe and continuance may be very reaſonably accounted for, without admitting its truth. The partiality natural to a parent inclines him to believe that his ſon is diſmiſſed from his own hands innocent and ſpotleſs; and to conclude, when the ſon is afterwards found to be vicious, that he has been ſeduced by others more vicious than himſelf. The ſon, indeed, in order to ſoften his own offences, imputes the guilt

guilt and blame to his companions; and the father is willing to give credit to his aſſertions; to condemn the ſchool, rather than his child; and the conduct of the maſter, rather than his own. But the truth is, that when boys of various diſpoſitions and habits meet promiſcuouſly in a ſchool, they uſually diſcover one another's inclinations, with a quickneſs and penetration reſembling the effects produced by the private ſignals of freemaſonry; and each aſſociates with thoſe, whoſe temper and purſuits beſt correſpond with his own. The corrupt attach themſelves to the corrupt, with the rapidity natural to thoſe, who are careleſs of the characters of their friends; and leave the diligent and virtuous to form their intimacies amongſt themſelves without interruption or moleſtation. The former do not frequently ſucceed in their endeavours to ſeduce the latter: and uſually reſpect them too much to make the attempt. The mutual encouragement and aſſiſtance

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of numbers will undoubtedly ſometimes puſh them further in culpable purſuits, than each ſingly would have had the means or the reſolution to proceed. But I have ſeldom known a youth deeply involved in depravity at ſchool, who did not bring the ſeeds of it along with him. Where, indeed, the previous connection of their parents, or ſome other incidental and external cauſe, has occaſioned an intimacy, which the diſpoſitions of the ſons themſelves never would have produced; in ſuch caſes, an individual will ſometimes greatly influence the manners of his friend; and from the weakneſs or the propenſities of our nature it unfortunately happens, that the boy already depraved will more frequently ſeduce his aſſociate into miſchief or into vice, than the virtuous youth will be able to reſtrain his leſs virtuous companion from it. But it is only where a conſiderable ſuperiority in age or fortune, in rank or talents, has given an extraordinary influence, that any

any ſingle boy can corrupt the general manners of a ſchool; and it is perhaps ſtill more rare, that where the manners of a ſchool are generally corrupt, a ſingle youth, whatever may be his diſpoſition and habits, can wholly eſcape the contagion. An arch-fiend may ſometimes ſeduce a number of inferior ſpirits from their duty and allegiance; but we can rarely hope to find the integrity and reſolution of Abdiel in a ſchoolboy.

In a numerous ſchool the noiſe and riot of the pupils have more merriment than miſchief; and their miſchief has more frolick than malignity. Care, however, muſt be taken, that occaſional frolick do not ripen into habitual cruelty; that repeated tranſgreſſions do not ſink into ſettled corruption. Here, indeed, is the place and neceſſity for the vigilance and authority of the teachers; and theſe, if wiſely exerted, will ſeldom fail of their effect. It is an eaſy taſk, on one hand, to introduce every pupil to proper con-

nections, when he firſt enters the ſchool, and to caution him, on the other, againſt ſuch as are diſtinguiſhed only by their vicious propenſities and ſeductive manners. It is eaſy, whenever any inſtance of vice is detected, to inflict ſome appropriate puniſhment, and to expoſe it to contempt or diſgrace: and it is not leſs eaſy, and ſtill more pleaſing, to ſhew conſtant favour and encouragement to truth, integrity, and diligence; to let it appear, upon all occaſions, that if a ſtudious and virtuous youth happen to be ſometimes expoſed to the ridicule or the malice of his leſs meritorious ſchoolfellows, he will find himſelf abundantly compenſated by the eſteem of his maſter and his friends. Such conduct in the teachers ſeldom fails to be rewarded by the gratitude, as well as the virtues, of thoſe intruſted to their care.

The exertion required in the ſtudents to perform the taſks appointed in every well regulated ſchool, is itſelf highly favourable

favourable to the vigour and activity of the intellect, and eventually, therefore, to the intereſts of virtue. There is always amongſt the pupils of a large ſchool a ſort of publick opinion, and certain laws of honour, which, though ſometimes founded upon erroneous principles, generally tend to the prevention of mean or malignant vices: and ſuch manlineſs of ſentiment and ſpirit is acquired as paves the way to the ſubſequent correction of any errors, into which the warmth or negligence of youth may ſurprize them. Let ſound learning give a young man ſtrength of mind to conquer himſelf, and from any other moral enemy he will ſoon have little to fear. And if ſuch a ſchool be found, as, it is hoped, will ſoon appear, the moſt favourable to the promotion of learning and knowledge, it will not be much leſs favourable to the ſoundneſs of moral principle. Notwithſtanding ſome extraordinary exceptions, which by the wonder they excite are proved to be rare,

it is commonly true, that as the mind is enlarged, the affections are rectified. *A fool*, ſays Rochefoucault, *has not materials enough to make a good man.* But none are ſo likely to perform their duty well, as thoſe who beſt underſtand it. And were the moſt illuſtrious examples to be ſelected from our hiſtory of men, who had united virtue with learning, profeſſional ſkill with integrity of conduct, they would generally be found amongſt the pupils of our publick ſchools.

The next objection, that the youth's improvement may be neglected amidſt the confuſion incident to numbers, is founded wholly upon miſtaken notions of a large ſchool, or of human nature. Order and regularity in its buſineſs are of the very eſſence of a publick ſchool, and preſerved and enforced there with a degree of ſteadineſs and uniformity, which can rarely elſewhere be found. Thoſe who have the ſuperintendence of ſuch ſeminaries are convinced by the ſtrongeſt of all teſtimony,

mony, their own experience, that by ſyſtem only can application produce its proper effect; that by ſyſtem only can any art or ſcience be ſucceſsfully taught. Nor does a larger portion of his time beſtowed by the maſter produce a correſpondent benefit to the pupil. His progreſs in literature does not depend ſo much upon what is done for him by others, as upon what he can be ſtimulated to do for himſelf. The teacher, indeed, will naturally exert the greater zeal and diligence where greater numbers are to profit by his inſtructions, and to judge and report his conduct; and the ſame circumſtance is every way favourable to the improvement of his ſcholar. The voice of the preceptor, to adopt the ſimilitude of Quinctilian, is not like the food provided for an entertainment; where each man's ſhare muſt be diminiſhed in proportion as the numbers are encreaſed. It ſhould rather be compared to the ſun, which diſpenſes the ſame degree of light and heat to each

individual of a multitude, however numerous and extenſive. The attention of the ſtudent ſeldom fails to be rouſed and fixed by the attention of his teacher. The oppoſition of his rivals, the aſſiſtance of his friends, the praiſe or cenſure of his maſter and his ſchoolfellows, the hope of reward and the fear or ſhame of puniſhment; all theſe motives united produce ſuch exertions, as no domeſtick teacher can hope to ſecure. By every exertion too his faculties naturally expand; confidence in his own powers encreaſes by ſucceſs; and the pupil of a publick ſchool often attains to an eminence in literature, which a youth differently circumſtanced would not attempt; and which himſelf, perhaps, had not preſumed to expect. Each, indeed, is aware, that a character eſtabliſhed amongſt a numerous claſs of ſchoolfellows will be very widely diffuſed in the world, and promote his advantage or his reputation in all the ſubſequent tranſactions of his life. And he to whom

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the palm of merit is adjudged, after an examination for honours and promotion, probably feels greater pride and pleaſure, and with better reaſon, than was ever felt by the ſucceſsful champion on the plains of Olympia or in the circus of antient Rome.

As another objection to our publick ſchools, properly ſo called, many parents have lately urged the increaſed and extravagant expence. But againſt this charge the vindication of the ſchools is not difficult; though a remedy for the evil may not ſo eaſily be found. The proper and neceſſary expences of our publick ſchools are not encreaſed, either beyond the proportion of other places of education, or beyond the general encreaſe of the expences of life; and upon what principle, or by what expedient, the charges there are to be kept below the level of charges every where elſe, it is ſurely not neceſſary to enquire. There is no cheap labour for their accommodation; no cheap market

for their ſupply. There is, indeed, one article of expence, of which the teachers complain, as loudly as the parents; and with much better reaſon; the large ſums entruſted to boys at their own diſpoſal, and for their private indulgence and gratification. Againſt this practice I ſeize the firſt opportunity of entering the ſtrongeſt proteſt in my power. It is not only the true cauſe of the complaint againſt the expences of our publick ſchools; but one principal ſource of thoſe vices, which are ſo juſtly condemned. I do not wiſh to prevent, for I would by all means recommend, ſuch a regular allowance of money to every youth at ſchool, as ſhould teach him the uſe and management of ſome property of his own, and purchaſe for him ſuch inſtruments of amuſement, or ſuch harmleſs luxuries, as are proper for his age and ſtation. But if parents will return their ſons to ſchool, after every receſs, with their pockets filled with gold; and if every friend at every

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viſit will augment the miſchief by injudicious liberality, let them not blame the times or the teachers for the natural effects of their own folly. While any part of the money remains, little elſe will be attended to, than how it may be moſt agreeably expended. It is in vain to prohibit to the youth the uſe of thoſe luxuries, which he is himſelf furniſhed with the means to procure. It is in vain to expect from the teacher any effectual reſtraint upon the vicious propenſities of his pupil, while he is ſupplied by the miſtaken kindneſs of his friends with the power, not only of purchaſing criminal indulgence, but of bribing thoſe about him to connive at his pleaſures, or to aſſiſt him in the purſuit.

To the ſcheme of private and domeſtick tuition there are objections of at leaſt equal weight with thoſe which have been urged againſt publick education. To engage a private tutor for a ſingle pupil is, perhaps, of all others the leaſt eligible mode of giving literary inſtruction. Men

of talents and ſpirit can ſeldom be prevailed upon to undertake the taſk; and it is in vain to expect the due diſcharge of it from teachers of any other deſcription. The preceptor does not exert much zeal or diligence for his ſolitary pupil; and the exertions of the pupil will not be more than proportionate to thoſe of his preceptor. To prevent any ſeverity of diſcipline is generally one of the firſt principles of domeſtick tuition. Compulſion and correction, therefore, are in a great meaſure excluded. The youth has no rivals of his own age to ſtimulate his efforts, and no friends to aſſiſt or applaud them. Honour and ſhame, of the firſt importance in all other caſes, have hardly any place in the ſyſtem. Every thing therefore is languid and inefficient. Even the ſports of the private pupil, for want of aſſociates and competitors, have little animation and little pleaſure. He cannot compare his own acquiſitions with thoſe of others; and therefore eſtimates them rather by the meaſure of his own vanity,

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than the ſtandard of truth. He is a coxcomb, before he is a ſcholar. His books, indeed, will engage leſs of his attention, than thoſe amuſements, in which he is too liberally indulged; and for the ſake of which, in ſome degree, the plan of domeſtick education was adopted; and he will value himſelf leſs upon his progreſs in literature and ſcience, than upon his taſte in dreſs, or his dexterity in the ſports of the field.

Nor is the boaſted advantage of purity of morals much better ſecured. The perpetual reſtraint, under which the private pupil lives, and the conſtant preſence of thoſe much older than himſelf, do not ſuffer his propenſities and paſſions to appear in their true colours; and conſequently their courſe cannot be ſufficiently regulated, nor their exceſſes reſtrained. He does not grow open and ingenuous by unreſerved communication with his equals; but artful and deſigning by watching the ſentiments of thoſe more advanced in

age; and the ſelf command, which he appears to poſſeſs, is often policy, not principle; hypocriſy, not virtue. He is almoſt inevitably taught inſolence and pride; for he is conſtantly attended, not as a helpleſs creature that perpetually ſtands in need of aſſiſtance; but as a perſon inveſted with rank and authority, by which he may demand it as a right. There is always danger that he will be too much in the company of ſervants; and unlearn in the kitchen and the ſtable, what he has been taught in the library and the drawing room. If, indeed, the reſtraint impoſed upon him be not ſufficient to guard him againſt vulgarity and vice, it loſes the very benefit, which it moſt profeſſes to ſecure; and if ſufficient for the preſent, there is ſome reaſon to apprehend ſtill greater exceſs, when that reſtraint ſhall be removed. The time muſt come when the private pupils ſhall be truſted at large in the world; and ſuch men have ſometimes been obſerved to plunge

plunge more deeply in the moſt licentious pleaſures, than thoſe for whom theſe pleaſures had leſs novelty, and therefore leſs attraction. This, indeed, is not much to be feared, where the moral and religious principles have been duly cultivated, and firmly eſtabliſhed. But the indulgence, in which the private pupil is reared, ſeldom gives much ſtrength of mind, or firmneſs of principle. He has been accuſtomed to deference and flattery. He will ſtill be ambitious of diſtinction: and it is but too probable that he will endeavour to compenſate the inferiority of his talents, by taking the lead in all the extravagancies of faſhion, or affecting a diſgraceful preeminence in vice.

A ſchool with a ſmall and limited number of pupils, though liable to ſomewhat fewer objections, is not entitled to much greater praiſe. Such ſeminaries are, indeed, the favourites of the preſent day. But almoſt every circumſtance, which recommends them to popularity, forms an

age; and the ſelf command, which he appears to poſſeſs, is often policy, not principle; hypocriſy, not virtue. He is almoſt inevitably taught inſolence and pride; for he is conſtrued, as can be permitted with ſafety only to men of the matureſt age and underſtanding; to allow them on all occaſions the freedoms and familiarities of equals and friends; theſe arts may anſwer the purpoſes, for which they are probably deſigned; they may conciliate the favour of the parents through the medium of indulgence to their ſons; but their natural tendency is to make the pupils men of pleaſure, not men of learning; to fit them for the faſhionable ceremonial of the drawing room and the tea table; not for the buſtle of publick ſtations, or the honourable labours of virtue. The maſter profeſſes to beſtow his whole time upon a ſmall number; and therefore a larger portion of attention upon their improvement; a profeſſion ſeldom fulfilled; and when fulfilled,

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plunge more deeply in the moſt licentious pleaſures, than thoſe for whom theſe pleaſures had leſs novelty, and therefore leſs attraction. This, indeed, is not much to the moral and religious and diverſions; in appearance, as it is in reality contemptible. Boys ſhould be compelled to exert their own powers in their leſſons, and permitted to indulge their own fancies in their relaxations. Their natural gaiety is checked by the preſence or the direction of their ſuperiors; and the youth, who does not play with alacrity and ſpirit, will ſeldom ſtudy with diligence or ſucceſs. Some of theſe ſchools again profeſs wholly to exclude the diſcipline of the rod. Yet perhaps without the uſe or the fear of it not a ſingle ſcholar was ever made. The acquiſition of learning muſt always be laborious; and by what motives, but the fear of a greater evil, ſhall boys be induced to labour with regularity and perſeverance! They cannot, or they will not, underſtand the force of argu-

arguments drawn from diſtant and future advantage; the policy of ſuſpending enjoyment for the preſent, in order to increaſe it hereafter. The forbearance and the virtues of the Stoick, indeed, ſuit their compreheuſion as little as their inclination. They are, when left to themſelves, the genuine diſciples of Epicurus; they graſp with avidity the pleaſures of the preſent hour, with little thought, and leſs apprehenſion, of what may happen to-morrow.

There are caſes, however, in which a publick education, notwithſtanding its general advantages, would be wholly improper. It ought never to be choſen for ſuch unhappy youths as labour under the misfortunes of imbecillity of mind, deformity of perſon, or permanent want of health.

In the caſe of imbecillity of mind, domeſtick care and tenderneſs are neceſſary till a much later period, than where nature has been more liberal of her endowments.

ments. Nothing leſs than the conſtant preſence and the moſt unwearied patience of his teachers can communicate ſuch a portion of uſeful information, or eſtabliſh ſuch habits of action, as may conduct the unfortunate youth with propriety and comfort through one of the humbleſt walks of life. The ordinary modes of inſtruction cannot give learning to him, to whom nature has denied the capacity to receive it. The common operations of agriculture will not create the powers of vegetation in the ſand.

Where a youth labours under great deformity of perſon, he ought certainly to be concealed in the ſhades of domeſtick education. In a large ſchool he cannot always join in the amuſements, with which he ſees others delighted. A thouſand incidents daily remind him of the unkindneſs of nature. He is frequently mortified by the ridicule and the inſults of his ſchoolfellows; till at length his comfort is deſtroyed, his temper rendered irri-

irritable and fretful, and his heart, I fear, ſometimes corrupted. For to theſe circumſtances muſt probably be aſcribed that malignity of mind, which has been too often obſerved to accompany deformity of perſon. No degree of literary improvement can make amends for evils ſuch as theſe; and under their influence it is not probable, that any great degree will be obtained.

In caſes of permanent want of health, publick education is not only improper, but in a great meaſure impracticable. Without health few of the advantages of education can any where be obtained. And it would be as cruel, as it is abſurd, to expoſe a youth to the tumult and accidents of a numerous ſchool, whoſe infirmities require rather the tenderneſs of a nurſe, than the inſtruction of a teacher. Some ſtation of life muſt be choſen, which will not require either that health and ſtrength, which nature has denied, or

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that learning, which the want of health does not permit him to obtain.

To theſe caſes muſt be added that of a youth approaching to manhood; whoſe literary education was neglected at the proper ſeaſon, and the neglect of which it is now propoſed to repair. Such a ſtudent ſhould not be mortified by being joined in the ſame claſs with children; the ſame modes of inſtruction cannot be the moſt ſuitable both to him and to them; and he ought to be puſhed forward with a rapidity, which is not practicable in the lower forms of a ſchool. To a youth of this deſcription, however, I cannot very ſtrongly recommend the purſuit of claſſical literature; becauſe I cannot very confidently promiſe him, either that he will ſucceed in his purſuit; or that ſucceſs will recompenſe the time and labour, which it will require. The languages of Greece and Rome are ſeldom compleatly attained, unleſs undertaken at a very early age; while the memory

memory is yet freſh and tenacious; while the underſtanding is not yet diſtracted by the cares of life and the paſſions of our nature; and while the authority of the teacher can confine his pupil to irkſome and continued application. As the mind approaches to maturity, it wants either reſolution to begin the ſtudy in queſtion, patience to perſevere in it, or aptitude to ſucceed: and even ſuppoſing all difficulties to be overcome, that time is employed upon words, which is due to things; thoſe hours are waſted in ſpeculation, which ought to be devoted to action. The ingenious hiſtorian of *the Britiſh Colonies in the Weſt Indies* has candidly acknowledged, that not having been *grounded in the grammar in his childhood, he afterwards found the ſtudy of the learned languages inſupportably diſguſting:* and Quinctilian has obſerved, that a child will learn in a few months to ſpeak his native tongue; but that to teach it to a foreign

a foreign ſlave will require as many years.

Our publick ſchools, properly ſo called, are unſuitable places of education for thoſe who are deſigned for any private ſtation, for the retirement and tranquillity of the country, or the patient diligence of trade. Young men do not there learn the ſciences beſt adapted to ſuch purpoſes; and they uſually acquire notions, habits, and connections, and ſometimes vices too, incompatible with their future deſtination. The mechanick does not willingly receive his apprentice, nor the merchant ſelect his clerk, from amongſt the pupils of a publick ſchool; nor has the pupil of a publick ſchool more inclination than aptitude to become the clerk or the apprentice. Our academies are the places where education ſuitable to ſuch ſtations is to be ſought; and in many of them it may undoubtedly be found. Sometimes, indeed, an attempt is made to unite the advantages of both.

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For, in the conduct of education, what abſurdity can be named, which human folly has not in ſome inſtance endeavoured to reduce to practice? From a principle of miſtaken pride, from the hope and proſpect of valuable connections, or from ſome other perſonal or general motive, a youth is not unfrequently fixed for a few years at Eton or Weſtminſter, and afterwards placed at an academy, to learn the qualifications requiſite for trade. But the firſt part of this ſcheme uſually fruſtrates the laſt. The maſter of an academy generally finds a youth of this deſcription amongſt the moſt turbulent and refractory of his pupils. He comes prepared to deſpiſe alike the perſons, the inſtructions, and the authority of his teachers; and determines not to ſubmit to what he deems the intolerable confinement and degrading drudgery of his deſtined occupation. He inſiſts, too reſolutely to be refuſed, on an appointment in the navy or the army; and leaves his

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parents to repent at leiſure the diſappointment of their hopes, and the folly of their plan.

Our publick ſchools are improper places of education, whenver claſſical literature is not indiſpenſibly required; or where time for a deep and critical acquaintance with the authors of antiquity cannot be allowed. If this, indeed, be neceſſary as the baſis of general knowledge, or of profeſſional ſkill, it can no where elſe be obtained with equal rapidity and ſucceſs. Their unqueſtionable ſuperiority in this point, however, will excite the leſs ſurpriſe, when we reflect, that it is almoſt the ſole object of their attention; and that it is the ſole object of their attention is abundant evidence, that for other purpoſes other inſtructors muſt be ſought. Wherever an ordinary acquaintance with the Greek and Roman tongues is ſufficient; wherever dexterity in the humble talents of writing and arithmetick, or the more dignified accompliſh-

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ments of ſkill in the elegant arts, and the knowledge of modern languages and mathematical ſcience are neceſſary to the future deſtination of the ſtudent, then, indeed, recourſe muſt be had, either to the aſſiduity of a private teacher, which in ſome caſes is the moſt eligible, or to ſome one of our numerous academies, where the requiſite accompliſhments are taught.

It is ſometimes ſuppoſed to be highly eligible to place a youth at one of our publick ſchools, with a view to his forming ſuch connections, as may be honourable or uſeful to him in the future periods of his life. If the deſign be to form intereſted connections with the great, and to court the future patronage of the powerful, it is contemptible in its principle, and ſeldom ſucceſsful in its object. It muſt begin or end in meanneſs and ſycophancy; and does not ſo often advance the fortune, as corrupt the heart, of the ſtudent. But if the purpoſe be to form

early and pleaſing intimacies upon equal terms; to cement thoſe friendſhips, which, when they endure through life, ſweeten it at every ſtep; this is, indeed, a deſirable and honourable object; but it is not confined excluſively to our publick ſchools. It will be accompliſhed equally at every other place of education, where a variety of ingenuous youth are brought together, and each is at liberty to ſelect from the number thoſe, whom a ſimilarity in years, ſentiments, and purſuits ſeems to have deſtined for his companions and friends. This recommendation of a publick education, however, can only be conſidered as a ſort of counterpoiſe to the objection that has been urged, from the ſuppoſed danger to the morals of the pupils. If a youth may ſelect companions, who will afterwards improve his fortune, he may equally ſelect ſuch, as will induce him to waſte it. If he may chooſe aſſociates, that will confirm the principles of virtue; he may alſo attach himſelf to ſuch, as

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will allure him to licentiouſneſs and vice. Conſidered merely in this point of view the chances of good or evil are naturally equal. Either ſide of the balance may appear to preponderate, according to the judgment or inclination of the parent; and the advantage or the miſchief will depend at laſt upon the principles and prudence of the pupil, and the ſkill and diligence of the inſtructor.

It may perhaps appear extraordinary that, in order to decide the preference between private and publick education, I have not yet adduced on either ſide the authority of any of thoſe learned and judicious teachers, who have expreſſed their ſentiments on the ſubject. I have not neglected theſe opinions, becauſe I am not fully ſenſible of the reſpect and deference that are due to them; but becauſe ſo many authorities may be urged in favour of either of the ſyſtems under conſideration, that I think authority will not ſatisfactorily decide the queſtion between them.

them. In the civil war of his country Lucan was unable or unwilling to determine the juſtice of the cauſe, when Cato was on one ſide, and fortune on the other. On theſe authorities, however, one general obſervation may be made. Of all the men who have enjoyed the opportunity and the advantages of a publick education, Locke, alone, perhaps, will be found generally to condemn it; and of the advocates for the domeſtick ſyſtem, the greater number have been either intereſted teachers, or men more willing to liſten to the flattering promiſes of theory and innovation, than to the ſober truths of practice and experience. By this time the reader does not want to be told, that I am not diſpoſed, like the Roman poet, to ſuſpend my judgment on the point before me; that I willingly give up the ſpeculative opinions even of Cato himſelf; and adhere ſteadily to the cauſe which has been ſanctioned by fortune and ſucceſs.

In the obſervations that have been made upon the comparative advantages of publick and private education, it is not to be ſuppoſed that the reſult will always be preciſely what has been ſtated. A thouſand circumſtances continually intervene to vary the effect of every ſyſtem, and diſappoint the concluſions of every calculation. Whatever mode be adopted, a wide difference will be made in the ſucceſs by the various degrees of ability and diligence exerted by different teachers, and ſtill more by the varieties of capacity and temper in their different pupils. Private tuition has ſometimes produced men of the moſt brilliant talents; and dulneſs and ſtupidity have often iſſued from our publick ſchools. But ſuppoſing the different ſtudents equally endowed by nature, and the ſame judgment and exertions in the reſpective preceptors, the effects that have been ſtated from the different modes of inſtruction may moſt reaſonably and uſually be expected. The

natural fertility of the ſoil cannot even by miſmanagement be wholly ſuppreſſed; nor can its ſterility by any ſkill and care be ſo ſucceſsfully cultivated, as to yield a rich and luxuriant produce.

Nor is it to be ſuppoſed that any ſyſtem of education can be adopted, which ſhall comprehend every poſſible benefit, and exclude every poſſible inconvenience. In almoſt every thing human a compromiſe muſt be made. As we approach one advantage, we generally recede from another; and a greater evil can ſometimes be avoided only by ſubmitting to a leſs. Though in the important buſineſs of education we muſt relinquiſh ſpeculative perfection for attainable excellence, yet happily ſomething like an union between private and publick inſtruction may be formed. While the ſtudent attends his ſchool during the day, he may in the evening receive the aſſiſtance of a private teacher; not, certainly, to ſave him the labour of performing his own exerciſe;

not to prevent, but ſtimulate, the exertion of his own powers; to explain to him the ſubject propoſed; to illuſtrate the principles of compoſition; to relieve him from any difficulty, that may impede his progreſs; to enable him to proceed aright, or to correct what is amiſs; to ſupply, in ſhort, whatever the regulations of the ſchool may not admit, or the thoughtleſſneſs of the youth may have neglected. Even this ſcheme is not without its difficulties and objections. And while ſome of our publick ſchools continue it, from their experience of its utility; others have rejected it, from a knowledge of its abuſes. This, however, is the plan which I can venture to recommend with the greateſt confidence; becauſe I have ſeen it attended with the moſt beneficial effects. No ſyſtem, however it may deſerve ſucceſs, can always command it. No future event, depending on human wiſdom and human paſſions, can be conſidered as certain.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

On the Choice of a School.

SUPPOSING the point decided in favour of a publick education; another queſtion immediately ariſes on the choice of a ſchool; a queſtion of no ſmall moment in itſelf; and rendered the more difficult to be determined, by the oppoſite pretenſions of the various ſeminaries amongſt us.

With reſpect to thoſe endowed ſchools, which have been eſtabliſhed in the various diſtricts of the kingdom, they are ſo numerous, that it is not poſſible for any individual to be ſufficiently acquainted with the whole to decide on their comparative merits; and theſe, it is well known, depend more upon the qualifications of the teachers at any given time, than on the regulations that may have been fixed

by the founders or the truſtees. Amongſt theſe, therefore, as, indeed, amongſt all others, the choice of a ſchool is little elſe than the choice of a maſter.

If the youth be deſtined for one of thoſe ſchools, univerſally known amongſt us by the denomination of publick ſchools, the difficulty of the choice cannot be great. In the literary and moral improvement of their pupils, there is every reaſon to ſuppoſe them nearly equal to each other. At leaſt I do not preſume to determine to which the preference ſhould be given. If any ſuperiority really exiſt, it probably ariſes leſs from any eſſential difference in their reſpective ſyſtems of education, than from the talents and diligence of the maſters in carrying them into effect. The enquiry in this caſe, therefore, will be directed, not ſo much to the mode in which the youth will be inſtructed, as to the convenience and connections of his family; not ſo much to the internal conduct of the ſeveral ſchools,

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as to the comparative benefits of their ſeveral foundations: whether conſiſting of ſome immediate emolument; or in the proſpect of future advantage in the univerſity or the world. If the youth cannot be placed on the foundation, the recommendations of a publick ſchool are materially diminiſhed. He is leſs reſtrained by the diſcipline; he is leſs attached to the eſtabliſhment; and the eſtabliſhment hardly conſiders him as a member, on whoſe improvement its own character eſſentially depends. He is acquiring habits that may be unſuitable to his fortune and deſtination; and his proſpects for the univerſity have no peculiar value.

Amongſt our numerous academies it may not be eaſy to decide upon their reſpective claims to preference. The beſt general criterion ſeems to be eſtabliſhed reputation. A ſchool may at firſt be filled with pupils by plauſible and deluſive pretenſions; or the maſter may have

friends, whoſe zeal and kindneſs are greater than their learning or judgment. Yet a high character cannot be permanent without merit. The want or the poſſeſſion of literary talents cannot be long concealed; and diligence and ability in the art of teaching may without difficulty be ſoon aſcertained. This character of the maſter, however, is not always implicitly to be received either from thoſe, who have ſons under his care, or from the ſons themſelves. The former may be partial in his favour; becauſe they may be pleaſed with novelty; or may hope to purchaſe ſome advantage for their own child by recommending the children of others to the ſeminary: and the pupils may be miſtaken in points, of which they cannot always be competent judges; or they may wilfully miſrepreſent the conduct of their maſter, in reſentment of ſuch reſtraint or correction, as thoſe who feel it, are apt to think unreaſonable and ſevere. A fair reputation obtained

tained in youth, and ſince ſupported in the world, and the recommendation of men of learning, whoſe ſentiments are not influenced by private intereſt or perſonal friendſhip, are much better teſtimony in his favour: and, above all, the judgment of thoſe, who have finiſhed their education at the ſchool, may be ſafely truſted. Their petty reſentments and animoſities are forgotten; and the benefits, which they received, are uſually remembered with gratitude, and ſtated with candour and fidelity.

But though it may not be eaſy to lay down any general rule, by which the character of the maſter can be unequivocally aſcertained; or to enumerate all the various circumſtances, by which the choice of a ſchool may be influenced or determined; yet there are certain points in the enquiry too important to be neglected; and in which hardly any man can be deceived but by his own fault.

The moſt obvious, as well as the moſt eſſential, requiſite for a ſchoolmaſter is, that he be himſelf a ſcholar; a man, whoſe education has been liberal; and whoſe information is at once correct and extenſive. With meaner qualifications, he may undoubtedly be an uſeful drudge in ſome of the humbler walks of ſcience, but he cannot preſide in a ſeat of literary education with juſtice to his pupils, or advantage to the community. That any man ſhould engage to inſtruct others, or to direct their inſtruction, in ſciences, with which he is wholly unacquainted; that he ſhould undertake to conduct the complicated proceſs of claſſical ſtudies, to which he has himſelf never applied, or in which he has never made any uſeful progreſs; this is a fact, which we believe, becauſe we have ſeen it: it is an abſurdity, to which we are reconciled only by its familiarity; as offenſive objects conſtantly before our eyes ceaſe to excite diſ-

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guſt, becauſe they ceaſe to attract our notice. Such a man cannot be fully ſenſible of the value of that literature, which he does not underſtand; and what he does not underſtand, he will not judiciouſly enforce. He will ſeldom teach ſyſtematically, who has not himſelf been ſyſtematically taught. He not only cannot, by his own efforts, do juſtice to thoſe entruſted to his care; but he cannot determine whether juſtice has been done by thoſe, whom he has employed. He knows not even what is a proper taſk to be appointed, or when it has been properly performed. The only poſſible reſource is, that he engage aſſiſtants duly qualified to give thoſe leſſons, which he is not able to give himſelf. But this is a very inadequate ſecurity for the improvement of his pupils. Of the talents of theſe aſſiſtants he is a very incompetent judge; nor can he decide with accuracy even upon their diligence and ſucceſs. But whatever may be the abilities and

application of the teachers, we ſtill entruſt the education of our children, if we entruſt it to any but a ſcholar, upon a principle, on which we ſhould be unwilling to entruſt any other affairs of delicacy or moment. I ought ſurely to repoſe little confidence in a legal practitioner, if I knew that he muſt depend upon the ſkill and integrity of his clerk. In building my habitation, I ſhould juſtly incur the ridicule of my neighbours, if I employed an architect, who muſt truſt to his labourers, both for the plan and the execution of the work.

That the moral character of the ſchoolmaſter ſhould be unexceptionable, is one of thoſe truths, which cannot be rendered more convincing by argument, or more clear by illuſtration. It is noticed therefore, not becauſe it is queſtionable, but becauſe it is indiſpenſible. Science is acquired to little purpoſe, if the morals be not guarded. Superior talents, unreſtrained by principle, are the moſt powerful

ful engine of miſchief to the individual and to ſociety. And in vain will the maſter enjoin virtue and religion by his precepts, if vice and impiety be recommended by his example. Our children, like our equals, will pay little regard to thoſe maxims, which are daily violated by our own practice.

For the ſame reaſon muſt be mentioned the indiſpenſible qualification of a cool and ſteady temper of mind; either natural or acquired; either eſtabliſhed by habit, or aſſumed for the more equitable diſcharge of his profeſſional duties. That tenderneſs of diſpoſition, which leads the preceptor to treat his pupils with ſomething like parental affection, has been frequently and ſtrongly recommended; and is, indeed, as neceſſary to the ſon during the years of infancy, as it is captivating to the mind of his parent. But for the maſter of a large ſchool it has been recommended without ſufficient conſideration. Tenderneſs of diſpoſition is

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almoſt invariably connected with irritability of temper. It leads to partiality and *favouritiſm*; the moſt noxious and offenſive weeds that a ſchool can produce. It generates, at one time, injudicious indulgence and careſſes, and, at another, capricious and immoderate correction; the bane of diſcipline, and the diſgrace of the maſter. The preſident of a numerous ſchool, indeed, ſhould conſider himſelf rather as a magiſtrate than a man. Though he is himſelf the legiſlator of the domain, he ought to be invariably bound by his own laws; and in the execution of them, always, indeed, to remember humanity, but never to violate equity and juſtice. Too much ſenſibility would deſtroy his own peace and comfort, without benefit to his pupils. It is kindneſs from principle, rather than from feeling, from conviction more than conſtitution; it is deliberate conceſſion in trifles, guarded by inflexible reſolution in objects of moment, that conſtitute the requiſite

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temper of a ſchoolmaſter; and provide at once for the comfort and the improvement of thoſe entruſted to his care.

It is deſireable, where it interferes with no other object of greater moment, that the youth ſhould be placed where the art or ſcience, moſt immediately neceſſary to his future deſtination, is taught by the principal maſter. A man of talents and integrity will undoubtedly be careful that his own attachment to any favourite ſtudy do not interfere with what is reſpectively neceſſary for the improvement and the intereſts of his different pupils. But his partiality will not be without its influence on his judgment and his conduct: and to what is taught by the maſter in every ſchool, a cuſtomary and almoſt involuntary preference is ſhewn. On this the firſt honours of the ſeminary are uſually beſtowed. On this it depends for its higheſt reputation. To this almoſt every other object leans; and to this the pupil will pay more early and diligent attention,

tion, than to any taſk enjoined by an aſſiſtant, or any ſcience, which he recommends. Nor can I admit it to be eligible, that the maſter ſhould merely inſpect every department of the buſineſs of a ſchool, and devote his own labour to none. It is by no means certain, that this would exclude partiality; and where the maſter teaches nothing, few things are taught with vigour or ſucceſs.

In the choice of a ſchool the perſonal and external accompliſhments of the maſter are entitled to conſiderable attention. A ſtrong conſtitution and athletic frame will not only enable him to bear with leſs inconvenience the neceſſary labours of his profeſſion, but may ſometimes prevent forcible oppoſition to his authority, from deſpair of ſucceſs in thoſe, who might otherwiſe be tempted to reſiſt. Any conſiderable deformity of perſon, on the other hand, or aukwardneſs of addreſs; any ſingular and habitual modes of ſpeech; any provincial dialect, or any imper-

imperfection of voice and articulation, are objections to a ſchoolmaſter by no means without their weight. They may, not improbably, injure by example the manners or elocution of the pupils; and they will certainly excite their ridicule and contempt; and diminiſh the influence and authority of the maſter. Where the teacher is deſpiſed, learning will not be much reſpected.

Publick opinion in this country evidently leans in favour of the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, as the moſt eligible inſtructors of youth: and for this preference reaſonable and ſubſtantial grounds may be aſſigned. It is founded, in the firſt inſtance, upon the general habits and experience of the kingdom. It has long been the cuſtom of almoſt every parent amongſt us, when in ſearch of a preceptor for his ſon, to turn his thoughts to the teachers of the national religion; well knowing it to have been chiefly under their conduct and management that our

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ſchools and colleges have attained their eminence and diſtinction; and that almoſt all the great ornaments of our country, whether in ſcience or in virtue, whether in the cabinet or the field, have either been wholly educated under their care, or greatly indebted to their inſtruction. This ſucceſs is ſuch a claim to publick eſteem and confidence as no other deſcription of men can produce; for no others have had the ſame opportunities to prove their merits and eſtabliſh their pretenſions. It is indiſputable evidence that the clergy in general have for the time paſt diſcharged the important truſt repoſed in them with fidelity and ſkill; and it is a rational ground of hope that they will diſcharge it with equal zeal and abilities for the time to come.

It is far from my intention to inſinuate that a layman or a diſſenter may not equal any other man as a ſchoolmaſter; but previouſly to all examination or evidence, the preſumption will ſtill be in favour

vour of the church. A clergyman muſt have had the opportunity of a liberal and claſſical education; and he will rarely engage in the profeſſion of a ſchoolmaſter, unleſs he is conſcious that the opportunity has been embraced and improved. To the faithful diſcharge of his duty, he has all the motives of other men, and ſome peculiar to himſelf. The principles and the obligations of religion and virtue, which he is ordained to teach, he muſt be ſuppoſed fully to underſtand; and while they ſhould peculiarly influence his own conduct, he is aware they muſt be taught in the deſk of the preceptor, as well as in the pulpit of the preacher. That general decency of deportment, which his clerical character preſcribes and requires, will aſſiſt better motives in reſtraining him from diſſipation and licentiouſneſs; and in attaching him to habits of domeſtic regularity, and to the purſuits and pleaſures of literature and ſcience. And what is by no means of leaſt importance,

tance, the clergy more eſpecially; except perhaps a few irregular and extraordinary characters, of which, I truſt, the numbers are as contemptible, as their tenets are pernicious; may be expected to inculcate ſuch religious and political principles, as are required by our civil and eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, and calculated to continue or to augment the political bleſſings we enjoy *.

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* I have, indeed, known one inſtance, and have been told there are more, of a clergyman and a ſchoolmaſter ſo bigotted to democratical principles, as to have lately omitted in performing the ſervice of the church, the prayer for the *High Court of Parliament*, and the prayer in *Time of War and Tumult*. Why ſuch men are not preſented to the Biſhop of the dioceſe; or, if preſented, why they are not ſilenced, I am not obliged to explain. Theſe men, however, according to their own accounts, are, amongſt the clergy, the only advocates of juſtice, truth, and philanthropy; and let their principles be tried by their conduct. A certain ſtipend is paid to them for performing the ſervice as *ſet forth in the Book of Common Prayer;* and they put the money in their pockets, but the

It has, indeed, been maintained that theſe laſt are objects with which a ſchool-maſter has no concern; and inſtances are not wanting of parents, who have enjoined the inſtructors of their ſons to teach them neither politics nor religion. Such an injunction, however, can proceed from thoſe parents only who have fully imbibed the pernicious tenets of our modern philoſophy; and a ſtrict and literal compliance with it, amongſt the pupils of a numerous ſchool, is hardly practicable

the duty is not ſo performed. At their ordination they voluntarily took the oath of canonical obedience; and when any part of the ſervice is altered or omitted, this oath is violated. The tendency, and probably the deſign, of ſuch omiſſion or alteration is, to create in the congregation an unfavourable opinion of the eſtabliſhment; and conſequently to excite murmurs and diſaffection, reſiſtance and rebellion; the miſeries of a civil war, and the atrocities of a revolution. To reconcile the firſt of theſe to juſtice, the ſecond to truth, and the third to philanthropy, is probably beyond the power of any other logick than that of a modern philoſopher.

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on the part of the preceptor; and if it were practicable, could not eaſily be juſtified.

Some notions and opinions, on the great ſubjects of religion and civil policy, every youth will unavoidably collect from his books, his companions, and his own reflections: and if theſe are not guarded and rectified by the inſtructions of the teacher, the notions will often be abſurd, and the opinions pernicious. It is his duty to correct error on every ſubject, and to inculcate truth; to extirpate the uſeleſs and noxious weeds of the mind, and to cultivate ſuch plants, as may bear ſalutary and valuable fruits.

Nor can the tenets of the maſter on theſe important points be eaſily concealed from his pupils. They will appear in the authors, which he directs to be read, or in his comments upon them; in his exhortations, in his reprimands, and in his private converſation; and the ſentiments, which he expreſſes, will naturally be

be adopted by his ſcholars, as ſanctioned by an authority, on which they may ſafely depend.

When the maſter is required not to interfere with religion and politicks, he is required to educate his pupil, with little reference to his future conduct as a member of ſociety, or to his reſponſibility for his actions to the creator and judge of the world. Yet theſe ſurely are the greateſt and beſt objects of education, and which give merit and value to all the reſt.

The momentous topick of religion will hereafter be examined more at large. And with reſpect to civil policy, though it is neither the deſign of the preſent eſſay, nor the duty of a ſchoolmaſter, to enter deeply into the controverted queſtions, to which it has given riſe, yet to the ſenior pupils of his ſchool occaſional inſtruction on the ſubject is by no means without its propriety and its value. It was the opinion of Milton, that youth ſhould be taught *to know the beginning, the*

the end, and the reaſons of political ſocieties; and ſuch knowledge undoubtedly tends to open and enlarge the views, and to exalt and ennoble the underſtanding. It may ſecure the youthful mind againſt the ſeduction of ſpecious theories, and againſt being elevated in its own eſteem by ſuperficial information. Were it in itſelf without utility, it is neceſſary in theſe times, to guard the riſing generation againſt the activity, the ſophiſtry, and the malignity of the enemies of eſtabliſhed order in general, and eſpecially of our own government and laws.

If one great object of Britiſh education be to form good ſubjects of the Britiſh government, this will be an additional argument in favour of the teachers of the eſtabliſhed church. When a diſſenter, of whatever denomination, commits his ſon to the care of one of his own fraternity, he acts agreeably to what the laws of his country allow, and to what his own conſcience dictates. He avails himſelf of

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the toleration, which our civil and eccleſiaſtical polity has granted, and which no wiſe and good man wiſhes to abridge; and he educates his child in thoſe doctrines, which he believes to have their foundation in truth, and to lead to virtue and happineſs. But I never heard that any of our diſſenters affected ſo much liberality of ſentiment, or would not have been aſhamed of ſuch laxity of principle, as to proſcribe their own doctrines of religion or civil policy in the inſtructions of the preceptors of their ſons.

Every member of the eſtabliſhment may reaſonably be expected to act upon the ſame principle and with the ſame prudence. To entruſt his offspring to any other than a fellow member for their education, if it be innocent, is certainly not judicious. It is well known that a large proportion of the diſſenters in this country differ from us as widely in their political, as in their religious, opinions; and whether we conſult the known pro-

perties of human nature, or the hiſtory of human actions, we ſhall find, that thoſe, who oppoſe an eſtabliſhment, always exceed thoſe, who ſupport it, in their zeal and activity to make converts to their cauſe, to encreaſe their numbers, and their ſtrength. He therefore, who ſends his ſon to a diſſenter for inſtruction, ſends him at the hazard of being educated in doctrines, which the ſon will ſoon find to be at variance with thoſe generally received; in a diſlike to that ſyſtem of political government, under which he is to live; and a diſapprobation of that form of religious worſhip, with which he will afterwards be conſtantly tempted by his intereſt to comply. It requires no great effort of imagination, then, to perceive in ſuch proceedings one ſource of diſcontent in the members of the community, of enmity to the eſtabliſhment, and to thoſe, who enjoy its advantages; of oppoſition in the great council of the nation; and ſometimes, in event, of rebellion in the ſtate.

ſtate. I am far from intending to reflect particularly upon the loyalty, the religion, or the morals of the diſſenters of our own times; but that there is too much juſtice in the general ſentiments that have been ſtated, the annals of our country abundantly teſtify.

Whatever weight there may be in theſe obſervations, as they apply to the diſſenters of our own nation; they muſt apply with ſtill greater force to the natives of other countries, as the inſtructors of the riſing generation in literature, religion, and civil policy. That a foreigner ſhould be employed to teach a foreign language is always reaſonable and often neceſſary; and I have no inſuperable averſion to a teacher of muſick from Italy, or a dancing maſter from France. But that a foreigner ſhould be encouraged in conducting a ſchool for the education of the youth of Britain, is one of thoſe anomalies in the proceedings of my countrymen, of which my deſign is to cenſure the impropriety,

not to explain the cauſe. I do not enter into the ſubject of national antipathies or national prejudices. Such an argument might be deemed illiberal and offenſive. And the opinion that has been advanced, does not appear to ſtand in need of any unfair or ſuſpicious ſupport. A foreigner ſeldom becomes a complete maſter of our language; and therefore cannot be expected to teach it with ſucceſs; and in his mode of pronouncing the languages of antiquity, he differs from us ſo eſſentially, that his pupils acquire habits, which they muſt afterwards be at conſiderable pains to correct. Our forms of civil and eccleſiaſtical polity he ſeldom fully comprehends or approves; and no man prepares youth with zeal and diligence for thoſe forms of ſociety, which he does not himſelf eſteem. With the ſyſtem and the value of our commerce he is but imperfectly acquainted; and therefore is not the beſt qualified to conduct, what will be allowed to be an object of great

great importance, the education of an Engliſh merchant. The peculiarity and the varieties of our national character he does not underſtand: and how then ſhall he adapt to theſe his inſtruction and his diſcipline! In what point, in ſhort, as an inſtructor of youth, with the ſingle exception of teaching his own language, can a foreigner come in competition with the natives of our own iſland? And as he is fully ſenſible of the circumſtances I have ſtated, it is no wonder, that while he pockets our money, he laughs at our folly.

To this reaſoning, I am aware, it will be objected by our modern philoſophers, that its obvious tendency and certain effect muſt be, to confirm prejudices, and to perpetuate errors and abuſes. But this objection, ſince I do not conſider it as either very forcible, or very well founded, I am not anxious to refute. Should the reader, however, think ſome refutation neceſſary, he will find what it

is hoped, will be deemed ſatisfactory on the ſubject, in ſome other chapters of the work *.

With reſpect to the ſituation of the ſchool, I can have no heſitation in ſaying, that for the ſake of the three great objects of education, the health, the literature, and the morals of our youth, it ought to be in the country; and that in proportion as the diſtance from any of our large towns is encreaſed, the advantages of the ſituation are improved. On the ſubject of health, the firſt and moſt important concern in the management of children, this will be univerſally admitted; and upon his health, excluſively of its own intrinſick value, every ſchoolmaſter knows, depend in no ſmall degree the ſpirits, the application, and the progreſs of his pupil. On the queſtion of morals, my own opinion is equally decided. In a town of any conſiderable magnitude, there are not only company and publick

* See Chapters II. and XIX.

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amuſements, and conſequently temptations to luxury and diſſipation, which interrupt application and relax the mind; but there are opportunities and facilities of vice, againſt which no vigilance can always guard; and criminal pleaſures, once taſted in early life, have often been found too powerful for ſubſequent advice and authority to corect or reſtrain. They frequently realize the pernicious effects of the fabled cup of the ſorcereſs; and make the youth forget his principles and his dignity, his character and himſelf *.

It

* With reſpect to the merits of a ſchool a few other queſtions of inferior moment have been ſometimes ſtarted. It has been aſked, whether it is moſt deſireable that the maſter of an academy ſhould be married or ſingle, and whether one table only ſhould be kept for his family and his ſcholars; whether each of the pupils ought to have a ſeparate bed; whether day ſcholars ſhould be admitted amongſt boarders; and whether what are called *parlour boarders* ought to be received amongſt thoſe of the uſual deſcription. But as theſe queſtions do not materially affect the

It is the advice of Locke, that a father ſhould be hardly leſs cautious in the choice of a preceptor, than in the choice of a wife, for his ſon: and in order to determine what ſchool is intitled to the preference, let the previous enquiries be made by the parent with all the care and ſeverity, which the importance of the ſubject both to himſelf and his offspring ſo juſtly demands. But when once his judgment is ſatisfied, and the option made, let the maſter be liberally, and almoſt implicitly, truſted. Nothing flatters him ſo highly as confidence in his talents and integrity. Nothing offends him ſo much as doubt and ſuſpicion. The former prompts him to diſcharge his duty with zeal and diligence: the latter tempt him to conſult appearances more

eſſential articles of education, they are hardly worth a minute and ſeparate diſcuſſion; and it is obvious with reſpect to each of them, that, according to the conciliatory deciſion of the celebrated Knight of the Spectator, *much may be ſaid on both ſides.*

than

than reality; to conciliate favour, inſtead of promoting ſcience. Few caſes can be named, in which mutual confidence is more obviouſly neceſſary; in which it is attended with more valuable advantages to the reſpective parties, and where the want of it is followed by evils of greater magnitude, than in the connection which ſubſiſts between the parent and the preceptor of his ſon. By frequent and unreſerved communication between them, the virtue as well as the learning of the pupil would in general be effectually ſecured. Much of the corporal puniſhment, uſually required in ſchools, might be ſpared. His advancement in ſcience would be greatly accelerated; and the firſt tendencies to vice diſcovered and corrected.

CHAP. VI.

On conſulting the Genius in order to determine the Profeſſion.

WHETHER nature has given to particular men talents adapted to particular occupations, and to them only; whether ſhe has deſtined each of us to his appropriate ſphere of action, in which alone we can attain to excellence and diſtinction, and excluded from which we muſt ſink into obſcurity and contempt; whether thoſe powers of the intellect, known by the denomination of genius, be innate or acquired, peculiar or general; theſe are queſtions of equal importance and curioſity in the analyſis of the human mind; and not without their weight in the humbler enquiry reſpecting the proper choice of a profeſſion. In the former point of view they are, indeed, too abſtruſe

abſtruſe and extenſive for preſent diſcuſſion; but in the latter, a few obſervations upon them will not be thought foreign to the purpoſe.

*That a poet muſt receive his peculiar powers fron nature, and not from ſtudy; that his genius is a gift, and not an acquiſition; is a maxim which has for many centuries paſſed current in the world; and is yet continually repeated as a truth, which it is not neceſſary to prove; becauſe it would be literary hereſy to call it in queſtion. Nor has the privilege of native endowment, *the ſpark of preternatural fire*, been confined to the poet alone. It has been claimed and admitted for the painter, the ſtatuary, and even the mathematician; for every man, who exhibited proofs of ſuperior talents; who roſe to ſuch excellence in his poſſeſſion, as his cotemporaries in general either did not attempt, or did not attain. Inſtead

* Poeta naſcitur, non fit.

of diſputing the truth of the maxim, indeed, they endeavoured only to account for the fact: and genius has been aſcribed to the bounty of nature, or to the inſpiration of the muſes; to the influence of the climate, or to ſome favoured era of the world; to a particular organization of the human frame; and, indeed, to ſuch cauſes, as it is difficult to enumerate, and not always eaſy to comprehend. It was an article of faith, in which weakneſs found conſolation for its want of powers; the blind adoration paid by ignorance to wiſdom.

The truth of the doctrine, however, ſeems to have been at leaſt tacitly queſtioned by many of thoſe, in whoſe favour it had been admitted. While they claimed it as an honour, *and had their claims allowed*, they did not depend upon it for their ſucceſs and their fame; to talents they have preſcribed inſtruction and induſtry; to genius, labour and cultivation. Horace and Cicero maintain that the advantage

vantage of good precepts and the exertion of art muſt aſſiſt the endowments of nature in the production of excellence: and though Milton talks of the *ſtellar virtue* and *a ſtrong propenſity of nature*, he joins to them *intenſe ſtudy*, and *an inſight into all ſeemly arts and affairs.*

By others, again the doctrine has not only been queſtioned, but wholly denied. Hogarth and Pouſſin, Buffon and Newton aſſerted, each in his own caſe, that the ſuppoſed peculiarity of genius was nothing but ſtudy and diligence; and Helvetius, Johnſon, and ſome other modern authors have maintained the general poſition; that the ſame proportion of talents is equally adapted to the proſecution of every ſcience; that he who has riſen to eminence in his profeſſion was endowed by nature with ſtrong powers of intellect; and that his peculiar excellence aroſe from diligent application to the peculiar object of his purſuit; as the rays of light produce their greateſt effect when concentrated

centrated by art. That partial attachment, which ſo many men feel for their favourite ſtudy, is not the dictate of nature, but the reſult of their own continued attention. Familiarity with their ſubject is not the conſequence, but the cauſe, of their affection for it. Ariſtotle's various and extenſive knowledge was the fruit of various and extenſive enquiry. *The great reader* was the appellation by which his maſter diſtinguiſhed him while yet a youth at ſchool. *It is by time and patience*, ſays the oriental proverb, *that the leaf of the mulberry-tree becomes ſatin.* And the eaſe and harmony, ſo obſervable in the poetry of Pope, is known, by the indiſputable evidence of blotted manuſcripts, to have been the effect of long ſtudy and repeated correction. None of the works of literature or ſcience, which we peruſe with wonder and delight, appear to have been produced at once by any vigorous effort of ſudden thought, and ſtill leſs by the aſſiſtance of

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preternatural inſpiration. On the contrary, indeed, they are known to have been brought to maturity by long and intenſe application of the mind to its object; by exerting all its powers upon a ſingle point. Paradiſe Loſt roſe by the labour of many years to its preſent ſtupendous height, from the ſcanty baſis of a mythological tragedy, and the ſplendid theory of gravitation was purſued to its completion, from the caſual reflection of its author upon the fall of an apple.

In oppoſition to theſe facts and theſe authorities, however, ſomething may ſtill be urged on the other ſide of the queſtion. That certain individuals are endowed by nature with faculties peculiarly adapted to certain purſuits, and that a bias upon the mind often clearly points out the employment, to which thoſe faculties are deſtined, cannot be fully diſproved, either by any unanſwerable deductions of theory, or any unequivocal teſtimony of experience. That nature grants

grants to different men intellectual talents in very different degrees is too obvious to require argument, or to admit diſpute; and it ſhould ſeem not unreaſonable to conclude, that theſe faculties are no leſs different in their kinds; requiring objects as different for their full improvement or their greateſt utility. The duties requiſite for the exiſtence and happineſs of human ſociety are varied almoſt without end; and it is natural to ſuppoſe that talents adapted to this variety would be granted by him, by whom ſociety itſelf was ordained. The ſtructure and the ſtrength of different men are fitted to very different kinds and degrees of exertion; and no ſatisfactory reaſon can be given, why an equal difference may not be expected in different minds. That courage and cowardice are frequently the unalterable effects of natural conſtitution, is univerſally acknowledged; and that men are conſequently formed by nature more or leſs qualified for various employments

cannot

cannot conſiſtently be denied. The intellectual powers of the two ſexes appear to be adapted to different purpoſes, to thoſe duties, which each reſpectively is required to perform; and the powers of the ſeveral individuals of the ſame ſex may in like manner be varied, according to that variety of ſituations and employments, into which men are unavoidably thrown in the changes and chances of human things. That the features and tempers of the parents are continually inherited by the offspring is too obvious to be queſtioned; and a ſimilar inheritance of intellectual endowments may not only be calculated upon without abſurdity; but is, indeed, ſo generally expected, that its failure is ſeldom obſerved without expreſſions of ſurpriſe and diſappointment. The wiſdom and learning of the father bring additional diſgrace upon the ignorance and folly of the ſon. To all who are converſant in the buſineſs of education it is well known, that boys who excel their

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ſchoolfellows in one particular purſuit; in another are ſometimes left at a great diſtance behind them. That may be true of intellectual exertions in general, which is found by experience to be true of a particular art or ſcience; and no man, for example, can attain to eminence in the theory or practice of muſick, who has not received from nature that peculiar organization, which conſtitutes a muſical ear. There are inſtances of excellence in ſcientifick purſuits, at periods of life ſo early, that it ſeems not poſſible they ſhould have been obtained by choice, inſtruction, and ſtudy. Pope *liſped in numbers while yet a child*; and Le Brun was a painter at five years of age.

Such are the conſiderations that may be urged on the ſide of natural and peculiar genius; and though they are not without plauſibility in their favour, many of them might be eaſily refuted, and none of them appear by any means deciſive. To examine each of them ſeparately, however,

however, would lead me into a diſquiſition not only voluminous in itſelf, but unneceſſary to the preſent purpoſe. I am concerned only with the degree and the variety of talents, as they appear in early life. In every large ſchool, it is well known, that the youth, who ſhews ſuperior abilities in one branch of ſtudy, will generally excel equally in any other, to which he ſhall apply with the ſame aſſiduity and zeal. The beſt poet in an academy, is frequently alſo the beſt mathematician. That different ſtudents excel in different purſuits does not ariſe ſo much from the different kinds, as from the different degrees, of their reſpective talents or reſpective diligence; and when a boy is diſcovered to make a much greater progreſs in one ſtudy than in another, the progreſs will be found to be proportioned, not ſo much to any peculiarity in the nature of his intellectual powers, as to the comparative difficulty of the various objects, to which he has applied.

plied. He who is not equal to the acquiſition of languages, may yet make a reſpectable figure in the eaſier ſtudy of mathematical ſcience; and he, who will never be able to demonſtrate a propoſition in the elements of geometry, may yet riſe to diſtinction in the mechanical operation of writing a fine hand. That powerful diſpoſition to particular purſuits, which is ſometimes obſerved in the minds of children or of men, may generally be traced to the perſons and objects, with which they have been moſt familiar; to the tranſactions and the narratives that have moſt forcibly engaged their early attention. It is not the effect of innate ideas, but of their peculiar aſſociation. The late Sir Joſhua Reynolds declared, that the deſtination of his mind to the art, in which he ſo eminently excelled, aroſe in his early youth, from the accidental peruſal of Richardſon's treatiſe on the ſubject. And the genius of Moliere took its direction to poetry and the ſtage, from

from his being made in his childhood the conſtant companion of his grandfather in his frequent viſits to the theatre. An inſtance much relied on for the original deſignation of the human mind to a particular purſuit, is that of the celebrated Paſcal; yet it evidently appears that his fondneſs for mathematical purſuits originated in his liſtening when a child to the converſation of men of ſcience, who reſorted familiarly to his father's houſe: and he was himſelf ſo far from believing the doctrine in queſtion, that he has left upon record an opinion, in which every intelligent ſchoolmaſter will ſupport him, that what is called nature, is only our earlieſt habit.

If, however, there be any ſtrong and unequivocal marks of aptitude and inclination for a particular purſuit; whether given by nature or the nurſery, whether the reſult of inſtinct or of accident; they may generally be very early and very eaſily diſcovered; and ought certainly to have

have their weight in the choice of a profeſſion. But the exiſtence of this natural genius is ſo doubtful, or its effects ſo feeble, that it rarely can be depended on; and need not be much regarded. In fixing a youth's future occupation in the world, our attention will be claimed by objects of much greater importance; becauſe of much more influence upon his proſperity and his virtue.

Let the parent's ſituation in life be firſt maturely conſidered; his rank and his property, his intereſt, his connections and his proſpects. Theſe will beſt determine the deſtination of the ſon: as it is within the circle of theſe, that his father can moſt effectually aſſiſt and ſupport him. Ambitious efforts to puſh him beyond theſe more frequently bring ridicule and repentance, than wealth, honour, or enjoyment. His own deſire of diſtinction will probably require reſtraint, rather than encouragement; the curb, rather than the ſpur. To indulge a youth in the various

luxuries

luxuries of his apparel and his table, of company, expence, and diſſipation, beyond the juſt meaſure of his birth and fortune, in order to procure for him a more elevated ſtation in ſociety, has, indeed, been occaſionally ſucceſsful, and is therefore frequently attempted. But the more uſual reſult has been loſs and diſappointment to the parent; and to the ſon, mortification and miſery; to feel with additional poignancy the want of what he had long enjoyed; and thoſe hardſhips of his humble ſtate, for which no previous diſcipline had prepared him.

Too many parents ſeem to forget the obſervation of Rochefoucault, *that we may appear great in an employment below our merit; but that we ſhall generally appear little in one that is above it.* Titles themſelves only diſgrace thoſe, whoſe actions diſgrace their titles. No ſuppoſition, indeed, is more erroneous or miſchievous, than that he beſt diſcharges his duty to his offſpring, who raiſes them the moſt

moſt above his own level in the world. Neither happineſs nor virtue are proportioned to rank or riches. And if any man really enjoys more ſatisfaction than falls to the lot of men in general, it is he who has riſen by his own efforts from a humbler to a higher ſituation of life; and who can compare his preſent affluence and elevation, with his former want and obſcurity. In oppoſition to claſſical authority, that an eſtate obtained not by labour, but by inheritance, is a neceſſary ingredient in human happineſs; it has always appeared to me to be a leſs kindneſs to a ſon, to bequeath him a fortune, than to give him an opportunity to obtain it for himſelf; to place him in a ſituation, where his progreſſive advancement may depend upon his own exertions. Nothing, indeed, can juſtify the attempt to give him a diſtinguiſhed place in ſociety, but his poſſeſſing ſuch talents as will enable him to diſcharge its duties with honour to himſelf, and advantage to

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the publick; and to aſcertain whether he really poſſeſſes thoſe talents is ſuppoſed to be hardly leſs difficult to the parent, than it is in itſelf important.

The parent himſelf is by no means an unbiaſſed judge. The abilities and merits of our own offspring are always viewed through the perſpective of affection, and magnified according to its power. The politeneſs of the preſent day requires that our friends not only give their opinions with tenderneſs and caution, but that they echo our own partial ſentiments with flattery and praiſe. The preceptor is generally either unwilling to mortify the parent, or afraid to hurt his own intereſt, by any unfavourable report, however juſt; for he well knows that any alledged want of talents or diligence will rather be imputed to the teacher than the pupil; and that ſuch information will more frequently give offence, than obtain regard. It is ſuppoſed too, that the teacher, whatever may be his judgment or his inte-

grity, will often be miſtaken. It is maintained that the dulleſt and moſt unpromiſing capacity in a child frequently breaks forth at a more advanced period of youth; and, like the ſun emerging from the miſt and gloom of the morning, ſhines with great and unexpected ſplendour. It is likewiſe aſſerted, on the other hand, that early and premature talents have not always attained that preeminence which their beginning promiſed; that we do not always find the fruit proportioned in its abundance to the profuſion of the bloſſom. In theſe points, however, the experienced teacher will not be greatly deceived. The youth of ſlow capacity, it is true, will generally improve with ſomewhat more rapidity as his underſtanding approaches to maturity; but he will hardly ever be entitled to the praiſe of quickneſs and brilliancy. In the child of an oppoſite character, parental partiality will often ſee genius, where there is only vivacity, and miſtake pertneſs

pertneſs for wit. But the exerciſes of a ſchool are a leſs fallacious teſt of the mental powers; and every teacher, who poſſeſſes the degree of penetration, which his ſituation requires, will ſoon diſcover real talents, wherever they exiſt. Nor will he be under any apprehenſions for their continuance and improvement. With due care and cultivation the harveſt of intellect is hardly ever known to fail. Here then the parent may learn to form the proper eſtimate of the abilities of his ſon. But he muſt encourage the teacher to ſpeak with freedom; as well as liſten with patience to whatever he may hear.

It is not unuſual with parents to leave to the ſon himſelf the choice of his future employment in the world; ſometimes, perhaps, merely to gratify his humour by indulging it; but more frequently in the hope, that he will purſue with diligence and ſatisfaction the track to which inclination has led him; or at leaſt, that he will adhere with ſteadineſs to the occupa-

tion of his own choice. But this expedient, however frequent or plauſible, has always appeared to me equally hazardous and abſurd. If the deciſion be poſtponed till the youth have years and experience ſufficient to enable him to make a rational option; it muſt be delayed till his education is neceſſarily finiſhed; till little appropriate inſtruction can be given; till few appropriate habits can be eſtabliſhed; and, indeed, till it may be too late to engage in the profeſſion, he might moſt deſire, either with advantage to himſelf, or on terms of equality with his competitors. If it muſt be made at an earlier period; what can be expected but that, which has ſo frequently happened, that the choice of folly ſhould terminate in repentance? The child having little obſervation, and leſs experience, can have no principles of ſelection; no rational grounds of preference. He will in all probability fix upon ſome profeſſion, with which he is too little acquainted

to

to perceive the difficulties, to which it is expoſed; upon that, which he has accidentally heard leads to affluence and honour; without reflecting on the talents, the care, and the toil, by which thoſe ſplendid effects were produced. Finding the acquiſition of learning laborious, he will ſelect an employment, where he fancies that neither labour nor learning will be required: or feeling, what youth naturally feels, a repugnance to reſtraint, he looks round for an occupation, where the greateſt freedom of action is allowed, and the greateſt indulgence of his paſſions may be expected; and we continue to ſee, what we have always ſeen, the idle and the luxurious of all ranks and deſcriptions crowding to the navy, the army, and the ſtage. No wonder ſurely that ſuch weakneſs is puniſhed by its natural conſequences, the diſappointment of the parent, and the miſery of the offspring.

Oppoſite to this is an error meriting equal cenſure; becauſe leading to equal

miſchief. The father will ſometimes determine the future deſtination of his child, not only before his faculties and diſpoſition can be aſcertained, but even before his birth; and afterwards perſiſt in the determination, not only againſt the youth's unfitneſs for the ſituation intended, but againſt his inſurmountable averſion to it. I would not on one hand, indulge a child in any choice of a profeſſion, which ignorance or caprice only had led him to form; nor would I, on the other, force him into a ſituation, againſt ſuch a rooted antipathy, as it ſeemed impoſſible to conciliate. Choice is often ſucceeded by diſguſt; but averſion rarely by ſteady attachment. Oppoſite extremes often terminate in the ſame point; and this unyielding obſtinacy leads to the ſame evils as indiſcriminate indulgence, the ſhame and miſery of the child, and the too late repentance and ſelf-reproach of the parent.

Though

Though in the choice of a profeſſion I think little regard is due to any ſuppoſed peculiarity of genius; yet conſiderable attention may reaſonably be paid to peculiarity of temper. When the youth approaches to the age, at which it will be neceſſary to determine his future occupation in the world, it will be prudent to conſider, and it will not be difficult to diſcover, the true character of his heart, as well as his underſtanding: whether, for example, he is more inclined to gravity or to vivacity; to be careleſs and inattentive, or obſervant and inquiſitive, reſpecting the objects before him; whether his diſpoſition be bold or timorous, phlegmatick or ſanguine; whether it be obſtinate or tractable, unfeeling or affectionate. How far any of theſe qualities have been implanted by nature, or acquired or modified by inſtruction and habit, it will not at this period be neceſſary to enquire; but it will be of ſerious importance to determine in what degree

they exiſt in his mind, and to what extent they are likely to influence his ſentiments and conduct. As far as it may be found practicable in itſelf, and conſiſtent with the intereſts of virtue, ſuch an employment may then be choſen, as ſhall appear moſt ſuitable to the temper of him, for whom it is intended; as ſhall not excite his diſguſt, either by oppoſing any ſtrong propenſity of his own, or ſubjecting him to the ridicule of his friends or rivals. Where no ſuperior motive intervenes, it is obviouſly more eligible that, in the diſcharge of the duties of his ſtation, he ſhould be allowed to yield to the current of inclination, not compelled inceſſantly to ſtruggle againſt it.

Were it leſs frequent, it would ſurely excite more ſurprize, that in determining the future employment of his child, the parent very ſeldom or very ſlightly conſiders its probable influence on his morals. He is anxious enough to provide for the acquiſition of wealth or honours, as ſubſervient

ſervient to happineſs; but rarely reflects, that they are truly deſireable only as they may be ſubſervient to virtue. To ſecure the future integrity of his ſon, the moſt effectual meaſure undoubtedly is, to impreſs ſo ſtrongly upon his infant mind the principles of morality and religion, that they ſhall be his guide and guardian in every future tranſaction of his life. But in aid of this proceeding it is of ſerious moment to conſider his temper and his paſſions; to ſelect a profeſſion, where neither the former will be too ſeverely tried, nor the latter too much expoſed to their appropriate temptation. It is as ſurprizing, as it is culpable, that the parent ſhould forget or neglect in the diſpoſal of his own child, thoſe truths, of which in all other caſes he appears to be fully ſenſible; that affluence and honours have only an occaſional and temporary importance, depending upon the diſpoſition of the poſſeſſor, and the uſes to which they are applied; but that virtue and

piety have a real and unchangeable value, ſecuring alike the happineſs of time and of eternity.

It is one of the imperfections of our nature, that where cool and impartial deliberation is the moſt neceſſary, becauſe the queſtion is of the higheſt moment, there our paſſions are the moſt agitated; and too often influence thoſe determinations, which reaſon only ought to guide. Nor is there any inſtance in which this is more obvious or more miſchievous, than in our ſentiments and conduct reſpecting the education, the talents, and the future profeſſions of our children. What ſeems moſt wanting to parents in this intereſting deliberation, next to the excluſion of that partiality, of which they can never be wholly diveſted, is a greater degree of confidence in the judgment of teachers, and of firmneſs in their own purpoſes. Teachers are not only leſs influenced by their affections and paſſions, than parents; but have better means of judging of the quali-

qualifications of thoſe entruſted to their care. Let them be heard with patience and candour; let the future deſtination of the youth be fixed after a mature conſideration of the whole of his character; of his talents and his temper, his wiſhes and his paſſions; and when the deciſion is made, let the deliberation be, not whether it may be changed with advantage, but by what means its ſucceſs may be moſt effectually ſecured.

If the obſervations already made be juſt, and that fondneſs for a particular profeſſion, which in boys is frequently miſtaken for natural genius and inſtinctive propenſity, be nothing more than an early and accidental aſſociation of ideas; this will ſuggeſt an obvious mode of attaching a youth to any occupation, which his friends may judge to be moſt ſuitable to his circumſtances and his talents. What aſſociations ſhall be formed in the mind of the ſon will depend not a little upon the prudence and diſcretion of

his parents. The more early his intended employment is made known to him, the greater proſpect is there that it will engage his attachment. It will naturally become an occaſional ſubject of converſation; let it always be mentioned in his preſence with reſpect; and his beſt hopes of wealth, diſtinction, and enjoyment in the world conſtantly repreſented as inſeparably connected with his diligence and ſucceſs in his deſtined profeſſion. By expedients like theſe the notion of a certain purſuit in life will *grow with his growth and ſtrengthen with his ſtrength*; till no capricious fancy of his own will ſupplant what his parents have inculcated, till no wiſh to change his occupation ſhall relax his induſtry, or diſturb his tranquillity.

In order to reconcile the ſon to his profeſſion, when once it is determined, an artifice is often practiſed by the parents, which I can by no means recommend; its inconveniences are ſtudiouſly kept out of ſight, leſt they ſhould excite diſ-

diſguſt; and its advantages placed in the moſt favourable point of view, that they may ſecure his attachment. Deception in the management of children is never juſtifiable in its principle, and ſeldom finally beneficial in its effects. In the preſent inſtance, when the youth finds toil and difficulty, where he had been taught to expect only eaſe and pleaſure, the diſappointment of his hopes will be aggravated by his reſentment of the impoſition; and what was deſigned to attach him to his ſituation, will be amongſt the firſt cauſes of diſlike and diſcontent. Let him rather be told at once, what he will always find to be true, that care and labour are the lot of man in every department of life; that ſucceſs is generally proportioned to exertion; and that difficulty is one of the moſt equitable meaſures of merit.

The moſt eligible and the moſt efficacious mode of reconciling a youth to the occupation, for which he is deſtined, is

to teach him from his early infancy, the value and the obligations of filial obedience; not only the deference which is due to the opinions of thoſe ſo much better able than himſelf to form a right judgment, and whoſe ſole motive for preference muſt be their deſire effectually to promote his intereſt; but ſtill more, the ſubmiſſion he owes to that authority over him, which nature herſelf has ordained; and which the parent can have no wiſh to exerciſe, but for the advantage of his offspring; in whoſe happineſs is involved his own. Filial obedience, indeed, is in few points more neceſſary, than in the choice of a profeſſion; and in this caſe, as in all others, it will neither be difficult nor painful, if it have been early begun, and ſteadily enforced. Nothing ſurely can give a youth a more favourable opinion of his occupation; than to know that it was choſen for him by thoſe, who have the right, the inclination, and the judg-

judgment to chuſe what is the fitteſt and the beſt.

Were theſe principles, which are ſurely as obvious as they are neceſſary, more generally attended to, we ſhould not ſo often ſee young men thruſt into ſtations, from which they are either ſoon driven by their inability to fill them: or in which they remain only the monuments of their own ſhame; and we ſhould not hear ſuch loud and frequent complaints; either that the parents were not able to fix their ſons in the profeſſion they moſt deſired; or that the ſons were involved in miſery and ruin, by being abandoned to the folly of their own choice. The degree of talents in a youth is the firſt object of attention: their nature is of leſs importance. The employment itſelf will ſoon give them the requiſite direction. Dexterity is the offspring of practice: and time and diligence will produce, if not genius and inſpiration, at leaſt all their beneficial effects.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

On the Eſtimation, the Treatment, and the Grievances of the Maſters of our Academies.

THAT every thing is honourable in proportion as it is uſeful, is a propoſition which appears at firſt ſight to be equally natural and juſt; and which, Seneca aſſures us, the wiſdom of antiquity approved; yet that this is by no means the caſe, the ſlighteſt inſpection of human opinions will abundantly convince us. We ſhall ſoon find, indeed, that honour is not ſo much the concomitant of utility, as of rarity; the reſult, not ſo much of the value of the work, as of the difficulty of the performance. That which requires the exertion of the ſuperior powers of the mind, and which few men can hope to attain, engages the largeſt

largeſt portion of admiration and eſteem. Agriculture is undoubtedly the moſt uſeful and the moſt neceſſary of human occupations. Yet it is not in the number of thoſe moſt highly reſpected; becauſe to practiſe it with ſucceſs, and even with excellence, requires only ſuch abilities, as almoſt every man is found to poſſeſs. But we honour the poet for his talents; though they contribute to little elſe than our amuſement; and the ſoldier for his courage; though it is made neceſſary only by the follies or the crimes of mankind.

Nor is this ſyſtem without equity in its principle, or benefit in its effects. Superior abilities are naturally entitled to the honours they receive: and in proportion as the higher powers of the mind are honoured, their exertions are ſtimulated and encouraged. But this ſyſtem alſo is ſometimes violated by the caprice of cuſtom and of faſhion. Attainments requiring equal time and talents in the purſuit, are not

not received with equal degrees of applauſe; and that which to-day is highly valued, was once perhaps wholly deſpiſed. Skill in the ſcience of the law requires not leſs abilities and application than ſkill in the practice of medicine; yet it certainly does not poſſeſs an equal ſhare in the favour of the publick. The performers on the ſtage were formerly treated with ſuch contempt, as to be excluded from all the ſuperior circles of ſociety; unleſs, indeed, when admitted as buffoons, for the entertainment of the company. But at preſent a player is every where received with welcome and reſpect: and, indeed, we do but juſtice, when we obſerve, that this change in their eſtimation has ariſen chiefly from the perſonal merit and talents of individuals. Garrick firſt purchaſed for the profeſſion that ſhare in the good opinion of the publick, which has ſince been very honourably ſupported and preſerved.

That

That the profeſſion of a ſchoolmaſter is in a high degree uſeful to the community, and that it requires for its due exerciſe no contemptible talents, are points univerſally confeſſed. But it will not be aſſerted, that it is held in proportionate eſtimation. The term does not convey to the mind the notion of a dignified character, and a ſchoolmaſter is not, as ſuch, well received amongſt the ſuperior orders of ſociety. A few individuals of the profeſſion, by their literary talents and private virtues, may have forced their way to eminence and diſtinction; and the maſters of many of our publick ſchools derive a dignity from the eſtabliſhments, over which they preſide. But the general idea entertained of a ſchoolmaſter ſeems to be, that of a humble drudge in the garden of knowledge; who digs the ſoil, and trains the plants, indeed; but who cannot taſte the beauty, or underſtand the value, of the flowers and the fruit. He is conſidered only as the pioneer of

ſcience;

ſchool of his pariſh, how well ſoever they may deſerve their hire by their diligence or dexterity, cannot contribute much to the honour of the fraternity, to which they belong. The profeſſion, like every other, is diſgraced by the ignorance, the vulgarity, and the vices of ſome of its members; and their errors and exceſſes not only excite the more notice, becauſe ſchoolmaſters are peculiarly expoſed to obſervation; but are the more ſeverely cenſured; becauſe it is reaſonably expected that thoſe, who undertake to become the teachers of our children, ſhould exhibit the example of excellence in their conduct, as well as its leſſons in their inſtructions. Thoſe too, in whoſe hands is the diſtribution of common fame, are connected only with common ſchoolmaſters, and generally decide from common appearances.

To the maſters of academies amongſt us, however, my obſervations are intended to be excluſively confined; and by ſome of

of theſe, artifices are practiſed not likely to exalt them in the eſtimation of the publick; becauſe not very conſiſtent either with the dignity of ſcience, or the principles of moral rectitude. Men, who do not poſſeſs, what ſhould ſeem an indiſpenſible requiſite, literature itſelf, ſometimes open ſchools, as an eligible mode of procuring that ſubſiſtence, which they know not by what other means to obtain; and in order to fill them with pupils, practiſe all the meaner arts of trade, in a caſe where they are the moſt culpable, becauſe the moſt miſchievous in their effects. Such men with a degree of aſſurance and inſenſibility, which will not eaſily be credited, where they have not been ſeen, intrude themſelves into any family, where there are boys to be ſent to ſchool; cenſure all other places of education, and ſolicit pupils for their own ſeminaries. Meaſures again not more laudable are too often adopted to ſeduce ſcholars from their rivals in the occupation;

or to eſtabliſh their own reputation for ſuperior learning, or ſuperior dexterity in the art of teaching. In the converſation and deportment of men of this deſcription, nothing, indeed, is neglected that can allure; nothing, that can captivate thoſe, who take every thing elſe upon truſt, when they are ſatisfied with profeſſions and appearances. When a number of ſcholars have been by whatever means drawn together, and ſubſequent enquiries are made by their friends reſpecting their conduct and improvement, the maſter is prepared with ſuch anſwers, as, with the neceſſary variations, ſuit every occaſion, and ſatisfy every parent. Where there is any reaſon to praiſe, he praiſes without bounds and without diſcrimination. When he cannot commend the general conduct of his pupil, he can apologize for the follies of childhood, and perhaps applaud his talents; and where talents are notoriouſly wanting, he can eſcape to the commendation of his temper and his diligence.

whoſe principal object is already attained. Artifices ſtill meaner and lower might be ſpecified; but they would violate the gravity of diſquiſition; and lead the reader to ſuſpect that I deſigned to make a jeſt of what is in truth of the moſt ſerious importance*.

That

* In a hundred different places you may find, if you will take their own word for it, the beſt academy, as well as the cheapeſt ſhop, in the world. The ſituation for this academy too is uſually choſen at ſuch a diſtance from one of our larger towns, and eſpecially from the metropolis, that it may anſwer all the purpoſes of a *cake-houſe* to the friends of the ſtudents. There is *an ordinary on Sundays* without a bill; and tea and chocolate for the ladies, whenever their inclination leads them to call upon their relations or their ſons. When the premiſes and accommodations are examined, and the examination is uſually ſolicited by the maſter, the beds are found to be equally ſoft and elegant, and the chambers to have a free circulation of air. The play-ground is dry and large, and ſurrounded with an inſurmountable fence. The pupils, when ſeen by their friends, are always neat and cleanly in their perſons and their dreſs. The utmoſt tender-

That every man ſhould wiſh to appear to advantage in his profeſſion, and to advance his fortune by extending his reputation, can neither excite wonder nor

neſs is profeſſed; and while other ſchools have recourſe to the tyranny and brutality of the rod, all offences are with them carefully prevented by the conſtant preſence of the maſter or an uſher amongſt their pupils. No dangerous or vulgar diverſion, therefore; and what is of ſtill greater moment, no ruinous vice, according to their own accounts, can ever find its way within their walls. With whatever fidelity the profeſſions of tenderneſs may in general be fulfilled; on the approach of the holidays, at leaſt, the ſcholars are ſeldom ſubjected to correction; and for this obvious reaſon; leſt they ſhould be ſent to their relations with the traces of it on their perſons, or the reſentment of it in their minds. On the contrary, indeed, they are kindly invited by claſſes *to ſup in the parlour*, and feaſt on the delicacies of the ſeaſon; and conſequently diſmiſſed for the vacation in ſuch temper, as may be moſt likely to ſecure their own return, and their recommendation amongſt their friends and connections. But I am weary of the ſubject, and deſiſt. Even this ſhort ſtatement has been thrown into a note, leſt I ſhould be thought to degrade the ſubject, the language, and the profeſſion.

provoke

provoke cenſure: It is at once natural and laudable; and ſome indulgence, perhaps, muſt be ſhewn towards meaſures adopted for ſelf-defence; towards thoſe artifices which the ſchoolmaſter is tempted to practiſe, in order to counteract ſuch as are practiſed againſt him. But I would ſtigmatize with the ſevereſt reprobation thoſe contemptible and deluſive expedients, which can only produce a temporary profit to the individual, and in the end, unavoidably degrade the profeſſion; which are uſually exerted only in proportion as the proper objects of education are neglected; which are in reality the diſguiſe of a deteſtable fraud; and the eſſential intereſts of the community, as well as immediate juſtice to the riſing generation, require that this fraud ſhould be counteracted and expoſed.

Before a man is permitted to preach in our churches, he muſt have produced teſtimonials of his competent learning and morals, and have obtained from the Bi-

ſhop his ordination and authority. Before he can engage in the practice of medicine, at leaſt in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, he muſt have proved his qualifications before thoſe, who are able to judge of them; and have procured from the college of phyſicians, or the corporation of ſurgeons, their approbation and licence. If then ſuch precautions are neceſſary to guard our faith and our health againſt the arts of innovators and empiricks, at an age too, when we ought to be better able to judge for ourſelves; ſurely ſome ſecurity may be juſtly required from thoſe, who are to be entruſted with the care of the learning, the morals, and the religion of the riſing generation. The licences from the biſhop of the dioceſe might be duly enforced *: or an incorporated

* When I firſt engaged in the academy in Soho-ſquare, I applied to the ſecretary of the then biſhop of London for the licence, which I ſuppoſed neceſſary to every man before he could legally undertake the profeſſion

rated ſociety of judges might be formed. Some examination ſhould certainly be ordained, before a man is permitted to open a ſchool; ſome teſtimony ſhould be demanded of his literary and moral qualifications; ſome teſt of his attachment to our civil and eccleſiaſtical conſtitution. How far the legiſlature might interfere with the education of our children, without prejudice to the liberty of the ſubject; and by what means ſuch interference might be rendered at once bene-

profeſſion of a ſchoolmaſter; and the ſecretary's anſwer ſurpriſed me, as much as my application appeared to have ſurprized him. "I have been ſix years in my office, ſaid he, and never heard of ſuch a thing before." It was then agreed that he ſhould make enquiry on the ſubject, and inform me of the reſult. I left my addreſs, and never heard more of the licence. I do not mention the circumſtances as any peculiar reflection upon the late excellent prelate or his ſecretary; but in the hope of exciting more attention to the canon, which appears to be generally neglected; and which the circumſtances of the times render it highly neceſſary to enforce.

ficial to the riſing generation, and compatible with the indulgence of parental affection and the exerciſe of parental authority; theſe are queſtions, which it is a matter of conſiderable delicacy to diſcuſs, and of no leſs difficulty to determine. But if it be the duty of government to provide not only for the obedience, but for the virtue and piety, of the members of the community; it muſt be allowed to direct that, by which thoſe important objects are the moſt influenced, and the beſt ſecured, the education of the youth of the country. The enemies of ſocial order in general, and in particular of our own government and laws, have endeavoured to make our ſchools the vehicles of their pernicious doctrines; they have attempted to poiſon our principles at the ſource, and to produce, in the next generation at leaſt, the miſchiefs, which they may fail to effect at preſent. It cannot ſurely be doubted then, but the legiſlature may juſtly meet its enemies on their own ground;

ground; that it may counteract their machinations by preſcribing to what hands education ſhall be entruſted; to what objects its purſuits ſhall be directed; and what political and moral principles it ſhall be permitted to inculcate. Such too has already been the ſucceſs of theſe enemies of our eſtabliſhment, that the interference of the legiſlature ſeems not only juſtifiable but indiſpenſible. Not only the comfort, but the exiſtence, of civil ſociety ſeems to be at ſtake; and to exert their efforts for its preſervation is the undoubted duty of thoſe, who are inveſted with the ſupreme authority of the ſtate. The queſtion of abſtract right appears to be ſuperſeded by the urgency of the danger; and what ſpeculation might doubt, or delicacy withhold, imperious neceſſity is likely ſoon to demand.

But wherever the remedy ſhould be ſought, the exiſtence and magnitude of the evil will not be queſtioned. Nothing, however, can be farther from my inten-

tion than to inſinuate that theſe diſgraceful artifices are general amongſt the maſters of our academies. Numbers amongſt them might eaſily be ſpecified, who act on all occaſions with the conſcious dignity, and, indeed, the conſcious integrity, of the teachers of learning and virtue. But however it may be lamented, it cannot be denied, that ſchools are ſometimes crowded with pupils under the care of men, who are not able to teach any department of ſcience; who are ignorant of every foreign language, and but imperfectly acquainted with their own; and who, indeed, poſſeſs not a ſingle recommendation for the office they have aſſumed, unleſs hypocriſy and ſervility be included in the number. Can it be matter of wonder then, that a diſappointed parent ſhould conſider as general or common the deception which has been practiſed upon himſelf; that the artifices of a few ſhould be ſometimes imputed to the whole; or that the injury done to ſociety

ſhould

ſhould be reſented by the reproach of a profeſſion, the utility of which muſt always depend in no ſmall degree upon its eſtimation.

This contemptuous idea of the maſter of an academy is one principal cauſe of the injurious treatment, which he ſometimes receives; of the vexations to which he is continually expoſed. Every profeſſion is undoubtedly ſubject to hardſhips peculiar to itſelf; and in each they are probably much more nearly equal than is generally ſuppoſed. We ſee the fairer ſide of our neighbour's condition, and we feel the miſeries of our own. Horace, indeed, and common obſervation will inform us, that the merchant and the ſoldier often reciprocally envy the ſuppoſed advantages of each other's purſuits; that he, who is immerſed in the buſineſs and tumult of the metropolis, ſighs continually for the eaſe and tranquillity of the country; and that he, who is condemned to the retirement and ſolitude of the

country, imagines that happineſs is to be found only in the crowds and amuſements of the metropolis. The hardſhips of the ſchoolmaſter, however, may reaſonably be preſumed to exceed thoſe of moſt other occupations; both becauſe the members of every other profeſſion admit them to be at leaſt equal to their own; and becauſe it is an employment, in which hardly any man engages from choice and predilection; which almoſt every man actually engaged in it, is eager to relinquiſh; and to which, when once relinquiſhed, no man, perhaps, ever voluntarily returned. Many of the grievances attendant upon it, however, might be ſo eaſily alleviated or removed, that one would hope a mere ſtatement of the facts might produce ſome portion of the remedy.

The firſt ſource of the vexations, incident to the profeſſion of a ſchoolmaſter, is the variety of objects, to which he is called upon to attend, and the different talents

talents and tempers of the ſtudents entruſted to his care. He has the conduct and ſuperintendance of a large domeſtick eſtabliſhment; to ſee that his confidential ſervants do not impoſe upon him; and that his teachers do not neglect their reſpective duties. He has the various endowments of his pupils to direct each to their proper object; to ſtimulate the ſluggiſhneſs of one, and to correct the perverſeneſs of another; to reſtrain vicious propenſities wherever they appear, and to encourage every inſtance and every ſymptom of virtue; to watch the health of the delicate; to force information upon the dull; and to eſtabliſh in all the habits of diligence, order, and obedience. He knows that he is under a diſtinct and ſeparate reſponſibility for the improvement of every youth placed under his protection; and that his reputation and his intereſt are in every inſtance at ſtake. Here then ſurely is ample employment for the moſt ſagacious and the

moſt active mind; here ſurely are required ſuch conſtant vigilance and exertion, as may be intitled to the admiration, but cannot excite the envy, of the members of any other profeſſion. But as theſe are the cares and labours peculiarly belonging to the conduct of a ſchool, the duties, which the maſter undertakes to perform; though they certainly mark the ſeverity of his occupation, they ought not perhaps to be ſtated as its grievances. They are, indeed, generally conſidered as the principal vexations, to which the maſter of an academy is expoſed; and much reaſon would he have to rejoice were this the real ſtate of the caſe. But the labours of the deſk form the ſmalleſt portion of his hardſhips. The different degrees of intellect poſſeſſed by different ſtudents are eaſily diſcovered; to this the different taſks are as eaſily proportioned; and every thing then proceeds with the order and regularity of mechanical operations. The various ſhades of character

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in the pupils do not attract much regard; nor would ſuch minute attention produce much literary advantage. Every hour brings its proper buſineſs. A compoſition is to be examined, or an author to be read: idleneſs is to be puniſhed, or diligence rewarded; tranſgreſſion is to be chaſtiſed, or merit applauded; and he, who ſuffers his temper to be ruffled, or his peace to be deſtroyed, by the follies of thoſe, who are placed under his care to have thoſe follies corrected, is either very culpable or very unfortunate; he wants one of the indiſpenſible requiſites for the office he has undertaken.

The real and the greateſt grievances of a ſchoolmaſter ariſe, not from his pupils themſelves, but from their relations and friends. When parents have heard ſuch a recommendation of an academy, as inclines them to give it the preference, as the place of their ſon's education, it is a very general cuſtom to make a viſit to the maſter and the premiſes; in order to form

form their own opinion of what may be expected from both. A thouſand enquiries, generally implying diſtruſt and ſuſpicion, are then made with very little delicacy. The manners of the maſter and his family, the bed chambers and the play ground, the diet, the terms and the modes of teaching, are ſcrutinized with the ſame minuteneſs and in the ſame ſpirit, that goods are cheapened on a counter; and he who is to be entruſted with the education of a child is treated with as little ceremony, as he that meaſures tapes and ribbands for the family. The maſter knows himſelf to be upon his trial, not indeed for his life, but for *that whereby he lives*; and, however he may feel the mortification, muſt conduct himſelf with unabated reſpect towards thoſe who are ſitting in judgment upon him, and who are propoſing to become in their own opinion his benefactors. He is well aware that their eſtimate of his merits will be formed from his appearance and con-

converſation; much in the ſame manner as they decide upon our current coins by the colour and the ſound. To their various enquiries he is not unprepared with appropriate anſwers. Whatever they may ſeem inclined to diſapprove, he is armed at all points to defend. There is indeed no part of his conduct, which the maſter of an academy ſtudies with more care, than his deportment toward thoſe who come to make perſonal enquiries after his ſchool; there is no point, on which he values himſelf more highly, than on the dexterity with which he gives his own character, and ſends away every inquirer ſatisfied with his plan and his accommodations. Too often, indeed, he is tempted to match hypocriſy againſt ſuſpicion, and to ſacrifice his conſcience at the ſhrine of his intereſt. It is by no means intended that the moſt diligent enquiries ſhould not be made in a caſe of ſuch importance to the parent and the child; but they may generally be made from others with more advan-

advantage; and where it is neceſſary to conſult the maſter himſelf, let him be treated with the delicacy due to a man ſuppoſed to be capable of inſtructing our youth in the principles of ſcience and of virtue.

Not to mention the interval of doubt and anxiety after theſe enquiries have been made, the negligence with which it is unreaſonably extended, and the levity, with which promiſes are frequently broken; when the pupil at laſt is brought, much uſeleſs advice is generally given on the ſubject of his treatment and inſtruction. Tenderneſs is firſt required; becauſe gentleneſs will do every thing with him, and ſeverity nothing. An aſſurance is given, that he has good talents, but has been neglected: that he had a very high character from his laſt ſchool; but ſtill the laſt ſchool is ſeverely cenſured; and perhaps for no better reaſon, than to engage a ſuperior ſhare of favour from that where the youth is now to be placed.

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I am far from wiſhing that the parent ſhould not communicate in confidence to the maſter his future proſpects with reſpect to his ſon, and whatever he thinks may be uſeful in his education. But inſtructions in the *art and myſtery* of teaching no man preſumes to give to the maſters of Eton and Weſtminſter; and if the maſter of an academy ſtands in need of them, our ſons ought not to be entruſted to his care. Nor would there be much reaſon to complain of the parent's directions in the firſt inſtance; but ſimilar directions are continually repeated by various branches of the family. The elder ſiſters, the maiden aunts and the grandmother, all occaſionally think themſelves authorized to interfere with the teachers of their relation. When once our chairs and tables are ordered from the cabinet maker, we ſeldom preſume to inſtruct him further in his own trade; we leave the mode of preparing the articles we require to his own judgment and ſkill.

ſkill. But thouſands think themſelves able to inform the maſter of an academy, of what ſhould ſeem at leaſt equally difficult, by what expedients he may moſt ſucceſsfully teach the principles of conduct and the elements of ſcience.

Nor do parents confine their ſuſpicions or their contempt of the maſters of academies to their own breaſts. They generally communicate them to their children; and thus provide additional vexations for the teachers. Inſtead of impreſſing on the minds of their offspring that reverence for the preceptor, which ſhould give weight to his advice, and efficacy to his inſtructions, they teach them to deſpiſe his authority, by allowing an appeal from it to themſelves; they encourage the pupil to ſit in judgment upon his teacher, and to make a report of his diligence, his temper, his talents, and his whole conduct in his ſchool and his family. Nor is this more humiliating to the preceptor, than prejudicial to his ſcholar. The latter

ter will never make the neceſſary exertions in obedience to commands, of which he is allowed to queſtion the propriety, and from which there lies an appeal; and the former is driven to regulate his conduct, not by what will ſatisfy the dictates of juſtice, but by what may beſt ſecure the approbation of his own pupil.

The conductor of a boarding ſchool again is ſubjected frequently to mortification, and ſometimes to loſs; becauſe parents do not give previous notice when they mean to remove their ſons from under his care; whether it be to ſome other place of education, or to the duties of their intended occupation in the world. The maſter of an academy can ſeldom aſcertain, what number of his pupils will return after every receſs; and the firſt weeks of opening the ſchool are conſequently a ſeaſon of uncertainty in a point of the utmoſt importance to his character and his ſucceſs. Circumſtances, indeed, ſometimes ariſe, in which ſuch notice

notice cannot be given. For reaſons abundantly ſufficient for the removal of a pupil may occur, which were not expected, and could not be foreſeen. But the moſt frequent cauſe of the omiſſion reſts, I believe, with the pupil himſelf. His report in the holidays muſt be heard; his wiſhes muſt be conſulted; and if theſe are unfavourable to the ſchool, it is not always thought neceſſary to treat with reſpect the maſter, of whom, it is ſuppoſed, there is reaſon to complain. It has, indeed, been declared in ſome inſtances upon the *Cards*, that a quarter's previous notice of the removal of a pupil, or the payment of the terms for that period, would be required. But this ſyſtem, though it would be unqueſtionably beneficial, is not likely to be generally adopted. To a well eſtabliſhed ſchool it is not neceſſary; and a ſchool not well eſtabliſhed will not venture to enforce it. The only adequate remedy is more open and liberal conduct on the part of the parents; to repoſe

repoſe their confidence, where they truſt their ſons.

Another ſource of no ſmall anxiety to the maſter of an academy, is the accidental ſickneſs of any of his ſcholars. The care of the children of others under ſuch circumſtances muſt always be a ſource of great concern to a man of principle and ſenſibility; and the danger of infection alarms a ſchoolmaſter both for his pupils and his intereſt. But this is not the whole, nor the worſt, that diſturbs him. If the diſeaſe have ariſen from any misfortune, he will probably incur the imputation of negligence; and from whatever cauſe it may have proceeded, it will not be eaſy for him to eſcape cenſure. If he give notice to the friends of the youth, upon every ſlight indiſpoſition, he is apprehenſive of being thought to trifle with their time and their quiet; and ſtill more, of bringing into queſtion the ſalubrity of the ſituation he has choſen: and if he truſt his own me-

dical friends, and the complaint at laſt prove dangerous or fatal, he will not ſoon be pardoned for not having given more early intelligence.

It may appear ſtrange, but it is neceſſary, to include his bills amongſt the grievances of a ſchoolmaſter. From them, however, not a few mortifications ariſe. In oppoſition to each other, or in the hope of attracting a greater number of pupils, academies frequently offer terms too low for the proſpect of independance; and ſometimes even of a liberal ſubſiſtence. Theſe, therefore, they are under the neceſſity of augmenting by various charges for articles not ſuppoſed to be included in the general terms; and as far as ſuch charges are factitious and unreaſonable, I abandon them to all the cenſure they deſerve. They cannot be more offenſive in themſelves, than the principle, from which they proceed, is contemptible. But there are others, which ſhould not be haſtily condemned.

Amongſt

Amongſt theſe the long eſtabliſhed cuſtom of an entrance fee is obviouſly entitled to priority of notice. By ſome of our modern theoriſts this has been pronounced abſurd. But it is by no means without its uſe. It is a fair and open addition to the profits of the maſter. It is not more than a reaſonable compenſation for the additional trouble of a new pupil. It is uſually the mark of an eſtabliſhed, not an upſtart ſchool; and it is a very neceſſary reſtraint upon the caprice of parents in changing the places of the education of their ſons; for theſe changes are not more vexatious to the preceptor, than prejudicial to the improvement of the ſtudent. In other charges the maſter of an academy is little more than the agent; in the payments to the teachers of drawing or dancing, and to the various tradeſmen, whom his ſcholars have been directed by their friends to employ. When the periodical accounts are to be ſettled, the total amount is at one time cenſured, without adverting

adverting to the particulars, of which it is compoſed; and at another, particular charges are condemned; ſome of which perhaps were ordered by the parents; others are obviouſly neceſſary; and none probably unreaſonable or unjuſt. Men of little minds too are apt to aſſume a temporary ſuperiority over thoſe to whom they are paying money; and to embrace thoſe opportunities to obtrude their advice or their reproofs. I have heard the maſter of one of our moſt reſpectable academies declare, that nothing belonging to his profeſſion was more irkſome than the inſolence, to which he was ſometimes obliged to ſubmit, when at laſt he received the ſums which had generally been very hardly earned. To the vexations on this ſubject a remedy equally ſimple and efficacious might be eaſily applied. Let the parents conſent to pay at once ſuch liberal terms as may fairly cover the certain and contingent expences of the education of their ſons; and I will venture to aſſert

aſſert that every ſchoolmaſter of reſpectability will readily receive them without this offenſive meaſure of making a bill. In a few caſes this ſyſtem has been adopted; and has, I believe, in every inſtance given ſatisfaction to the parties concerned. One cannot, indeed, reflect, without a mixture of ſhame and indignation, that the ſame ſort of contcſt ſhould ſometimes exiſt between the parent and the preceptor, which is ſo often obſerved between the inn-keeper and his gueſt; the one calculating, how much he can charge, and the other, how little he ſhall pay.

But the moſt copious ſource of vexation to the maſter of an academy is the complaints and reproaches of thoſe, who have entruſted their children to his tuition. The impatience of parents is not eaſily ſatisfied; and whenever rapid improvement is not made, their partiality aſcribes the defect, not to any want of talents in their ſon, but to the negligence

and miſmanagement of the teacher. The father is too often inclined to proceed with ſomething of the ſpirit and impetuoſity of the antient philoſopher, who, when he found the pupil illiterate, without further enquiry chaſtiſed the preceptor. The maſter is then haraſſed with reproaches, which he can neither prevent by removing the cauſe, nor ſilence by ſtating fairly the incapacity of the ſtudent. For this would not fail to give offence, and probably be followed by the removal of his pupil. He is, indeed, frequently teized with complaints ſo frivolous on other ſubjects, that were not the conſequences often ſerious, they would excite only a ſmile of contempt; the loſs of a handkerchief, or a grammar; a blot in a copy book; or an error in entering an operation of arithmetick; accidents which no care can prevent; and which therefore ſhould not be made the ſubject of any injurious imputation to the maſter.

Com-

Complaints become ſtill more troubleſome, when made on the authority of the child. His miſtakes or his reſentments, his idleneſs or his diſgrace, his love of novelty, and his wiſhes to change his ſchool; all theſe cauſes, and ſuch as theſe, often tempt him to miſrepreſent what really happened, or to invent what never occurred. Few boys can be made fully ſenſible of the guilt and meanneſs of falſhood; and ſtill fewer have penetration enough to underſtand or to foreſee its fatal effects. Whenever therefore they have a favourite point to carry, they violate truth with little ſcruple. The negligence of thoſe appointed to attend them; the want of cleanlineſs in their linen or their beds; the coarſeneſs or ſcantineſs of their food; the tyranny and ſeverity of their teachers; frauds with reſpect to their pocket allowance; the maſters frequent abſence from ſchool; or his vices in private life; all or any of theſe are made the baſis of complaints;

which, however groundleſs, are too often believed, and excite the attention, and probably the indignation, of the parent. The misfortune is, that under ſuch circumſtances the parent does not always purſue the meaſures, which juſtice and candour would have directed. In ſome inſtances the child is removed from the ſchool in ſilent reſentment; and the maſter has no opportunity of vindicating his character and conduct: in others, the ſubjects of complaint are ſtated with ſuch rudeneſs and inſolence, that he diſdains to reply; and even where he obtains a patient hearing, little credit is given to his denial or defence againſt the aſſertions and the wiſhes of a favourite child.

Theſe complaints are often referred, as to a competent judge, either to ſome contemptible adventurer, who teaches arithmetick and geography to the daughters of the family, and who would be glad to have his ſervices extended to the ſons; or to ſome rival ſchoolmaſter, or ſchool-

maſter's

maſter's friend, who is previouſly diſpoſed to encourage the diſguſt, becauſe he hopes to profit by the quarrel.

It is unqueſtionably as much the duty as the inclination of the parent to watch the improvement of his child, and to ſtate to the maſter whatever appears to retard it. But it may be ſtated with all the delicacy due to his character and ſtation; not as a fact and a certainty, but as a report or a ſuſpicion; as a charge, of which, though not fully credited, it is deemed incumbent upon the parent to enquire into the cauſe and the foundation. Frivolous complaints ſhould not be encouraged, or ſhould be wholly deſpiſed; and thoſe of a more ſerious aſpect, if fairly ſtated, will often be as fairly explained. When it is known to the boy that all his accuſations againſt his ſchool will be thus canvaſſed, few will be made; and he will rarely venture upon falſhood, when he knows that ſtrict enquiry will be made into the truth.

The weight of theſe grievances may not perhaps appear very oppreſſive, except to thoſe by whom they have been felt. But let it be remembered, that they are felt by men, whoſe ſenſibility to the treatment they receive has uſually been quickened by a liberal education; who have been taught to reſpect themſelves by the progreſs they have made in the purſuits of ſcience; who are intereſted for the honour of their own profeſſion, of which the general eſteem is not equal to the general utility; and who are conſcious of their intellectual ſuperiority over moſt of thoſe, by whom their miſery is inflicted. But what gives the keeneſt edge to theſe vexations, what enables the weapon to inflict a deeper ſmart, is the want of a more adequate recompenſe for the labours of the profeſſion. In theſe days it muſt be a proſperous ſchool that furniſhes a liberal ſubſiſtence: the moſt numerous is not more than equal to a diſtant proſpect of independance; and in none

none can affluence be obtained. Regard for his intereſt, therefore, keeps the maſter in a perpetual ſtate of anxiety. The loſs of a pupil in diſguſt may prove a ſerious misfortune. It is a reduction from profits, which could ill bear diminution; it interrupts one of the connections, by which the ſchool is ſupported; and probably converts a friend into an enemy. An academy is vulnerable in a thouſand points, and every wound may be fatal.

Let it, however, be underſtood, that I have ſtated theſe grievances by no means as inſeparable from the profeſſion; but as evils, to which it is continually expoſed. I have not ſtated the want of candour and liberality in parents, as if it were univerſal or general. Had I done ſo, I had been guilty of equal ingratitude and injuſtice. I have myſelf experienced, in common, I doubt not, with every other ſchoolmaſter of reputation, numerous inſtances of ſuch confidence and generoſity, as were equally honourable to

him, who gave, and to him, who received them.

But every large ſchool has connections, from which the inconveniences, that I have enumerated, may be apprehended; and ſome of our inferior ſeminaries have few, perhaps, of any other deſcription. I have ſtated theſe vexations as proceeding by no means excluſively from the friends and parents of the pupils; for they are too often provoked by the ſchool-maſters themſelves; and ſometimes proceed wholly from their folly, their meanneſs, or their pride. *Errors are committed within as well as without the walls of Troy.* I have ſtated them with the greater freedom; becauſe they are of importance, not only to the profeſſion in particular, but to the community at large. They exhauſt that patience in the teacher, which ought to be reſerved for the inſtruction and benefit of his pupils; they ſometimes render his temper ſo irritable, that he can hardly be conſidered as fit for

for his own profeſſion: they accelerate that injury to his health, which his labours would naturally occaſion, and render him the ſooner unequal to his taſk. Above all, they have driven many to endeavour to make an academy merely an occupation of profit; to look upon their pupils, not ſo much as youth to be educated, as inſtruments of gain; to practiſe all thoſe artifices, which have been ſo juſtly cenſured; all that deluſion, which the people ſeemed to court, and without which they would not be contented. Is it to be wondered, then, that in this caſe, as in almoſt every thing human, evils become reciprocally the cauſe and effect of each other! Unprincipled ſchoolmaſters provoke illiberal treatment, and illiberal treatment makes unprincipled ſchoolmaſters. Is it to be wondered, that ſo few men of ſpirit and talents engage in the profeſſion; or that they eſcape from it, as ſoon as a decent ſubſiſtence can elſewhere be found!

In enumerating what were in his judgment the requiſite qualifications of an inſtructor of youth, Quinctilian has drawn ſuch a literary and moral character, as would, indeed, do honour to any profeſſion; but which human frailty forbids us to hope will frequently be found: yet the idea of the antient rhetorician, however exalted, ſeems by no means equal to the popular expectation of the preſent day. If we conſult the ſentiments and conduct of the leſs intelligent and leſs liberal part of the community, it will appear that the maſter of an academy is required to poſſeſs, like the hero of a romance, not only talents and virtues, above the ordinary endowments of humanity, but ſuch contrarieties of excellence, as ſeem incompatible with each other. He is required to poſſeſs ſpirit enough to govern the moſt refractory of his pupils, and meanneſs enough to ſubmit to the perpetual interference of their friends; ſuch delicacy of taſte, as may enable him

to inſtruct his ſcholars in all the elegancies of polite literature, and robuſt ſtrength enough to bear without fatigue the moſt inceſſant exertions. He is required to poſſeſs learning ſufficient to reliſh the eloquence of Cicero and Demoſthenes; and goodnature to liſten without wearineſs to a grandmother blazoning the merits of her heir; ſkill adequate to the performance of his taſk, and patience to be inſtructed how to perform it. He is required to poſſeſs judgment enough to determine the moſt proper ſtudies, and the moſt ſuitable deſtinations for his pupils; and complaiſance at all times to ſubmit his own opinion to the opinions of thoſe, who have employed him; moral principle ſufficient to enſure on all occaſions the faithful diſcharge of his duties; and forbearance to hear thoſe principles continually ſuſpected, and his diligence and fidelity called in queſtion. It is expected that he ſhall be daily expoſed to the ſevereſt trials of his temper, but nei-

ther require nor be allowed any indulgence for its occaſional exceſſes; and that he be able to ſecure all the good effects of diſcipline, without the uſe of the only means which ever yet procured them. He is expected to feel that conſcious dignity, which ſcience confers upon its poſſeſſor; and yet to deſcend without reluctance to teach infants their alphabet; to poſſeſs generoſity enough to maintain his pupils liberally without a liberal ſtipend; and inſenſibility enough to permit his demands to be taxed by thoſe, by whom they ought to be moſt readily and gratefully diſcharged.

That many parents appear to expect this variety of talents in the teachers of their ſons, the maſters of academies know to their ſorrow and their coſt; but where ſuch conſtellations of excellence are to be found, it is ſurely needleſs to enquire. The glaſſes of Herſchel, in the ſearch, would *ſweep the regions of ſpace* in vain.

CHAP-

CHAP. VIII.

On Grammars *.

IT may on the firſt view appear extraordinary that any obſervations on the comparative merits of different grammars of the ſame language ſhould ſtill be either uſeful or neceſſary in a country, where education in all its parts has been long and carefully ſtudied; where its advantages have been ſo juſtly appreciated, and ſo generally underſtood. The beſt grammar in each caſe reſpectively, one would imagine, ſhould have long ſince been univerſally known, and of courſe univerſally

* It may be proper to obſerve that I uſe the word *Grammar* in the ſenſe, in which it is commonly underſtood in a ſchool, as meaning that collection of rules, by which any given language is to be learned, or the little volume in which that collection is contained.

adopted.

adopted. That a conſiderable variety, however, is ſtill in uſe amongſt us, though it may excite ſurpriſe, will not be diſputed; and by all men of experience in the office of inſtruction the inconveniences of this variety are not more known than lamented. Some of our principal publick ſchools have each a grammar of their own; which they appear as unwilling to change, as if their intereſt and reputation depended upon differing in this reſpect from their rivals; and the books, which one or other of them recommends by its practice, are employed in each of our academies according to the education, the judgment, or the connections of the maſter. It has ſometimes happened too, that the maſter, or the teacher, of an academy has himſelf written a grammar; in the hope, no doubt, of acquiring fame by the publication, and profit by the ſale; and it would, at leaſt, be applauded by his own friends, and ſold in his own ſchool. In the Engliſh, French, and

Latin

Latin languages, at leaſt, this has been no unuſual expedient. In the Greek, indeed, it has rarely been attempted; not only becauſe Greek is a language not frequently taught in a private ſeminary; but becauſe to write a grammar for the uſe of thoſe, who engage in the ſtudy of it, requires a degree of learning which the maſter of ſuch a ſeminary does not himſelf always poſſeſs.

Beſides theſe motives of intereſt, there are other plauſible arguments in favour of this multiplication of grammars. One man hopes or profeſſes to ſimplify and abridge ſome former publication; and therefore to diminiſh the drudgery of learning it by heart; another to render it more perſpicuous in the arrangement, or more familiar in the language; and therefore more ſuitable to the capacities of children. A third has detected errors and abſurdities in all former grammars of the language, of which he undertakes to treat; and the cauſe and the apology for his

his publication are the defects of thoſe, that have gone before it. Nor are theſe reaſons without ſome foundation in truth. That we ſhould have made ſome improvements in the compoſition of a grammar, and in the art of communicating it to our pupils, while we have been making ſuch rapid advances in every other department of ſcience, was naturally to be expected, and is too obvious to be denied. Some ſuperfluities have been expunged, ſome miſtakes have been rectified, and ſome obſcurities have been cleared. Still, however, that all the grammars uſed in our different ſchools, publick as well as private, are diſgraced by errors or defects, is a complaint, as juſt as it is frequent and loud. Nor will the cauſe of this complaint ever be removed, if that be expected from a grammar, which no grammar can effect; that it ſhould teach the language to the ſtudent, without the aſſiſtance of a maſter; that it ſhould illuſtrate all the niceties of inflexion, conſtruction,

ſtruction, and proſody, and yet be neither too prolix for the memory of a child, nor too abſtruſe for his comprehenſion. Without oral inſtruction children can never be taught languages: and with that aid from an able maſter the choice of a grammar is of leſs importance, than ſeems to be generally ſuppoſed. Written rules ſhould certainly contain no falſe principles; they ſhould teach no errors, which it will afterwards be neceſſary to correct. They ſhould conſtitute a compleat and permanent code of laws, to which the ſtudent may at all times appeal. But by what means he may be moſt expeditiouſly enabled to underſtand and apply them, will depend leſs upon the laws themſelves, than upon the dexterity of his inſtructor.

Theſe conſiderations, with others that might eaſily be aſſigned, will, I hope, be a ſufficient apology for not entering into a minute compariſon of the merits of the various grammars employed for the ſame language

language in different ſchools. Such as are adequate to the purpoſe may eaſily be pointed out. The number of publications of this deſcription for the French language, that have appeared amongſt us, might ſeem to occaſion ſome perplexity in the choice. But Palairet's has always appeared to me the beſt adapted to the uſe of children; and Chambaud's may be read with advantage by thoſe, who have made ſome progreſs in the language. Into the comparative merits of the different grammars written by the natives of France in their own language, and for the uſe of the ſtudents of their own country, it is no part of the preſent purpoſe to enquire.

In England we have but one publication, which can juſtly be conſidered as a grammar of the language: and even this labours under a defect, which in a ſcientific treatiſe cannot, perhaps, eaſily be avoided; that it is not ſufficiently level to the capacities of children. For their uſe, indeed,

indeed, it does not appear to have been intended. Aſh's Introduction, or Harriſon's Grammar, may be employed with advantage before it; but no man, without the ſtudy of Lowth, will eaſily become maſter of his native tongue, or deſerve the reputation of an Engliſh ſcholar. In our grammars of the Latin language, hardly any eſſential improvement has been made in that, which bears the name of Lilly *. Little elſe, indeed, has been attempted, than ſome reduction in the number of the rules, and ſome approach to conciſeneſs and perſpicuity in the language. In theſe reſpects the abridgement for the uſe of Eton ſchool deſerves the greateſt praiſe; and ſeems to have the faireſt chance to make its way into general uſe. But even this is by no means exempt from errors and imperfec-

* It is now known that Lilly did not write the grammar in queſtion; and the *Accidence* prefixed to it, is ſaid to have had for its author no leſs a man than Cardinal Wolſey.

tions.

tions. The tenſes are ill defined, the proſody is very incomplete, and ſome rules yet ſtand in the ſyntax, which are erroneous or abſurd. I conſider it on the whole, however, as entitled to the preference; becauſe it conveys to boys the largeſt portion of information in the ſmalleſt compaſs and the moſt intelligible form.

In the publication of a Greek grammar, the firſt place, I think, muſt be allowed to Weſtminſter. The praiſe of perſpicuity, indeed, may ſtill be claimed by Eton; but for an intimate knowledge of his ſubject, the laurel will not ſoon be tranſplanted from the brow of Buſby. Whatever obſcurities there are, and there are not a few, the maſter is at hand to explain; and without a maſter, no grammar will be ſufficient for the acquiſition of the language. Which of them ſhould be followed in ſuch points as the numbers they reſpectively aſſign for the declenſions of nouns or the conjugations of verbs, it may

may be difficult to determine; and for the uſe of learners it is of little importance to enquire. In the proſody they are both lamentably deficient. I do not expect that a *compendium* on this ſubject for boys ſhould diſcuſs and determine, what will probably never be determined, the uſe and meaning of the accents; but it ſhould contain a ſyſtem of rules, by which the poetry of the language might be *ſcanned* with facility, and read or written without the violation of *quantity*.

The mode of teaching the grammar muſt in all languages be nearly the ſame. To commit to memory the general rules of the declenſions, the conjugations, and the conſtruction; and then to apply them in what is technically called *parſing*; in aſſigning every term to its proper claſs in the parts of ſpeech; in determining the caſe of the ſubſtantive, and the mood and tenſe of the verb; and in pointing out the dependence and connection of every word with that which precedes or follows

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the beſt foundation for the knowledge of grammar in general. Compared with its rival or its maſter, *Imperial Greek*, it has fewer declenſions, fewer conjugations, fewer dialects, and fewer anomalies *. Its inflections, therefore, may be more methodically ſtudied, more clearly comprehended, and more eaſily retained in the memory. This circumſtance alone, then, is ſufficient to juſtify the general practice

* Whether we ſuppoſe the declenſions of ſubſtantives in the Greek language to be ten, and the conjugations of verbs to be thirteen, with the Eton grammar; or the former to be five, and the latter four, with the Weſtminſter; or whether we ſuppoſe, with ſome other grammarians, numbers different from both; the truth of the poſition advanced will be in no degree affected. In whatever proportion the number of conjugations and declenſions is diminiſhed, in the ſame proportion the number of exceptions muſt be encreaſed. The varieties in each reſpectively, by whatever name they may be called, will ſtill remain the ſame; and conſequently the ſame burthen to the memory, and the ſame perplexity to the underſtandings of the ſtudent.

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in our ſchools, of teaching the Latin previouſly to the Greek; of making that the initiatory language, which beſt facilitates the acquiſition of others; which is, indeed, the parent ſtock, from whence moſt of the modern tongues of Europe are derived; and in which many of the moſt valuable treatiſes in art and ſcience have been written, and may ſtill be moſt advantageouſly read.

The acknowledged neceſſity of committing to memory the fundamental rules of grammar, and the conviction from experience that this may be effected during the years of infancy, ought to decide, without further controverſy, a queſtion that has been ſometimes agitated; whether it is more eligible to learn authors from grammar, or grammar from authors. There are, however, ſo many other arguments equally obvious and concluſive, all bearing on the ſame point, that one feels leſs difficulty in deciding the queſtion, than ſurprize that it ſhould ever have been

been ſtarted. To proceed upon principles at firſt is the moſt compendious method of attaining every branch of knowledge; and the truths impreſſed upon the mind in the years of childhood, are ever afterwards the moſt firmly remembered, and the moſt readily applied. The drudgery of learning dry rules by heart, which is ſo indiſpenſibly neceſſary in the ſtudy of languages, is never afterwards either willingly undertaken, or expeditiouſly performed; unleſs, indeed, where the habits of early youth have rendered the practice eaſy and familiar to the ſtudent. That the memory is greatly ſtrengthened by exerciſe, and by that alone, is a truth not more important in itſelf than generally acknowledged. Names and terms may be learnt before the ideas or objects, which they repreſent, can be fully comprehended; and much of the moſt valuable ſeaſon of life conſequently ſaved. Milton profeſſed in his academy to teach things rather than words; but it is not

known that even in the hands of Milton the attempt was crowned with ſucceſs. The exertions of the teacher were probably counteracted by the defects of his plan *.

That the rules, by which the Latin language is to be learned, ſhould themſelves be written in Latin, has ſometimes been thought an objection to the grammars in moſt general uſe amongſt us. But in this caſe, as in moſt others, that which is moſt generally adopted, is uſually found to be moſt expedient. The greateſt inconvenience of Latin rules is removed by

* It is curious to obſerve what oppoſite opinions on the ſame point have ſometimes been advanced by men of the greateſt talents, when they have conſulted imagination and theory, inſtead of practice and experience. Locke, in his haſte to introduce ſtudents to more valuable information, would exempt them from the drudgery of learning by heart all the technical rules of languages; while Scaliger, in his zeal for philology, has aſſerted, that even religious diſſentions themſelves have generally originated in men's ignorance of grammar.

a literal tranſlation; and ſome poſitive advantages are obtained. The uſe and meaning of many technical terms are learnt; with which it is neceſſary to be familiar in order to read, at any future period, the diſquiſitions of the antient grammarians. So many words and ſo much conſtruction, as occur in the ſyntax, the proſody, and the paſſages adduced as examples of each, become thoroughly underſtood; and, what is not without its value, a facility in the pronunciation of the language is more early acquired. This is one of the many caſes in human affairs where theory ſeems to be on one ſide, and practice on the other; but where the ſpecious arguments of ſpeculation muſt yield to the ſolid teſtimony of experience.

That the ſame grammar ſhould be every where adopted for the ſame language is an event very much to be deſired, but very little to be expected. A Scotchman is not eaſily perſuaded to re-

ject the work of Ruddiman for the Latin tongue, nor an Engliſhman to adopt it. In our publick ſchools novel experiments will not be tried. No ſufficient reaſon, indeed, can be aſſigned, why any one of them ſhould depart, out of compliment to any other, from that ſyſtem of inſtruction, which has been found by experience to be efficacious and ſucceſsful; and they have little inducement to provide for ſuch a mutual exchange of ſtudents, as very rarely takes place amongſt them. But in academies the removal of pupils from one to another is more frequent, than would be credited, were it not ſeen. As far as theſe removals ariſe from the caprices of ignorance and folly, one can hardly wiſh to encourage them, even by guarding againſt their miſchievous effects. But they are often made upon more reaſonable and ſufficient grounds. A child is placed at one ſeminary to be inſtructed in the firſt rudiments of literature; and after a certain period removed to another, to be fitted

fitted for his future deſtination in the world; or he is fixed at a preparatory, in order to be ſent at the proper ſeaſon to a publick ſchool; and the miſconduct, the reſignation, or the death of a maſter occaſionally compels a parent, contrary to his intention and his wiſhes, to change the place of his ſon's education. But from whatever good cauſe theſe removals proceed, it is deſirable to prevent or to alleviate the evils, with which they are neceſſarily attended. Were the ſame modes of inſtruction every where purſued, theſe evils would have no exiſtence; and were the ſame grammar of the ſame language every where adopted, they would be materially diminiſhed. The introduction to a different grammar at every new ſchool occaſions an uſeleſs expence to the parent, a conſiderable degree of additional trouble to the maſter, and not a little interruption to the progreſs of the ſcholar. This deſireable uniformity in the uſe of a grammar our eighth Henry endeavoured

to ſecure for the Latin language by a royal proclamation; which had then the force of law; and though the interference of the legiſlature for a ſimilar purpoſe, at this day, would not be without its advantages, the objections to it are perhaps of ſtill greater weight. It would appear to lay an arbitrary reſtraint upon the purſuit of ſcience. It would not fail to excite clamour and diſcontent; and, with reſpect to the immediate ſubject of enquiry, it would diſcourage the exertions of ingenuity, and preclude improvement, in the future compoſition of our ſchool books. It may, however, be aſſerted with little fear of contradiction, that were the worſt grammar, now in uſe amongſt us, univerſally adopted for each language reſpectively, it would on the whole contribute much more to the literary improvement of the riſing generation, than the occaſional aſſiſtance of better publications, in the midſt of that variety, with which they are ſo frequently perplexed.

perplexed. It would, at leaſt, be an eſſential advantage to that learning, which our academies are reaſonably expected to communicate, and which it is truly deſireable their pupils ſhould always receive.

CHAP. IX.

On the Study of the Engliſh Language.

TO the natives of every country the ſtudy of their own language ſhould ſeem to carry with it its own recommendation. Yet in this kingdom, till within a few years paſt, the grammar of the Engliſh tongue had not attracted general notice, and conſequently could not be generally underſtood. We were not, indeed, till lately *a nation of readers*; and ſtill leſs were we, what, without any violent hyperbole, we may now be denominated, a nation of writers. In the time of Elizabeth, our orthography was wholly irregular and unſettled. Almoſt every literary man, it ſhould ſeem, adopted the ſpelling moſt conſiſtent with his own notions of analogy, or moſt agreeable to his own

own ear, or his own fancy. In the former part of the laſt century, which has been ſometimes called the Auguſtan age of Britiſh literature, the ſtyle of our moſt celebrated authors was not always unexceptionably correct. Swift and Addiſon themſelves are not proof againſt the attacks of a rigid grammarian. Many, even at this day, write and ſpeak Engliſh with tolerable accuracy, who have acquired the talent more from imitation and habit, from reading and converſation, than from the ſtudy of its principles, or the knowledge of its laws. Attention to our own language, however, is at preſent very generally excited; and the few obſervations, which I have to make, are deſigned, not to reſtrain, but to encourage it; to recommend the grammar and the authors of our vernacular tongue as a part of the general ſyſtem of education.

To the pupils of our publick ſchools the acquiſition of their own language, whenever it is undertaken, is an eaſy

taſk. For he, who is acquainted with ſeveral grammars already, finds no difficulty in adding one more to the number. And this, no doubt, is one of the reaſons why Engliſh engages ſo ſmall a proportion of their time and attention. It is not frequently read, and ſtill leſs frequently written. Its ſuppoſed facility, however, or ſome other cauſe, ſeems to have drawn upon it ſuch a degree of neglect, as certainly cannot be praiſed. The ſtudents in thoſe ſchools are often diſtinguiſhed by their compoſitions in the learned languages, before they can ſpeak or write their own with correctneſs, elegance, or fluency. A claſſical ſcholar too often has his Engliſh ſtyle to form, when he ſhould communicate his acquiſitions to the world. In ſome inſtances it is never formed with ſucceſs; and the defects of his expreſſion either deter him from appearing before the publick at all, or at laſt counteract in a great degree the influence of his work, and bring ridicule upon

upon the author. Surely theſe evils might eaſily be prevented or diminiſhed. Lowth's publication might be occaſionally read with the teacher. It would ſuggeſt to the pupils, what perhaps eſcapes their notice, that the principles of their vernacular tongue are as regular and determinate, as thoſe of the languages of Greece and Rome. Their compoſitions ſhould be more frequently in Engliſh, as well originals, as tranſlations; that they might learn to expreſs with facility and elegance the ſentiments of others or their own. They ſhould occaſionally read or ſpeak it in publick; as well to remove the natural timidity of youth, as to correct improprieties of deportment or enunciation; and in proportion as theſe circumſtances brought them to the knowledge and the taſte of our beſt authors, they muſt neceſſarily prevent or diminiſh the ordinary and ruinous attachment to ſuch noxious rubbiſh, as our circulating libraries uſually ſupply.

By the mere Engliſh ſtudent the language muſt be learnt, as all other languages are, by the ſtudy of its grammar, and the peruſal of its writers. The little variety in our caſes and our tenſes, and the ſmall number of rules in our ſyntax, prevent that appearance of ſyſtem, which is found in many other languages. But the parts of ſpeech muſt be diſtinguiſhed; the concords muſt be underſtood; and the few general rules, that can be applied, muſt be carefully impreſſed upon the mind; the beſt authors muſt be ſelected for peruſal; and paſſages occaſionally *parſed*, with the ſame form and regularity, with which a claſſical leſſon is uſually analyzed. Compoſitions of every deſcription muſt be required at the hands of the pùpil: letters, eſſays, and declamations in proſe; and in verſe, exerciſes in all the uſual meaſures of our poetry.

This may not always make him, what, indeed, is not always deſired, an accompliſhed writer; but it will enable him to do,

do, what is always deſireable, to read with judgment, taſte, and pleaſure. In books of criticiſm our native tongue ſurpaſſes every other, as well in their excellences, as their numbers. A few of the beſt of theſe ſhould be put into the hands of the ſtudents of the language; and I need not add that Blair's Lectures and Johnſon's Lives of the Poets will not be omitted. The peruſal of books, like theſe, will, no doubt, ſometimes form criticks more ſuperficial than ſolid; with more loquacity than taſte; and who may as often weary their hearers as inform them. But time, information, and experience will repreſs theſe exuberances. The humbleſt portion of knowledge is preferable to ignorance; and it is better to be ſometimes diſguſted, than never to be delighted.

To begin right is, in this point, as in every thing elſe, of the utmoſt importance. The colloquial barbariſms of boys ſhould never be ſuffered to paſs without

notice and cenſure. Provincial tones and accents, and all defects in articulation, ſhould be corrected whenever they are heard; leſt they grow into eſtabliſhed habits, unknown, from their familiarity, to him who is guilty of them, and adopted by others, from the imitation of his manner, or their reſpect for his authority.

That a corrrect orthography ſhould always be enforced, will not be queſtioned: but doubts may ariſe as to what orthography is correct. I ſhould have no heſitation in deciding, with Horace and Quinctilian, in all caſes whatever, in favour of that, which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed. The permanency of the language is of much greater importance, than the irregularity of an analogy, or the excluſion or retention of a ſuperfluous letter. To the preſervation of our vernacular tongue our ſchools might eſſentially contribute; for they might in a great degree prevent or remedy that affec-

affectation, by which its ſtability is endangered. To write all ſubſtantives with capital letters, or to exclude them from adjectives derived from proper names, may perhaps be thought offences too ſmall or too contemptible for ſerious animadverſion. But the evil of innovation is always ſomething; and in theſe inſtances the advantage is certainly nothing. In his zeal for derivation or analogy, or in oſtentation of grammatical ſkill, a man of talents will ſometimes change the vowel in a ſubſtantive, or the preterite of a verb; and ſhould every other writer of eminence allow himſelf the ſame liberty, our authors might ſoon be little leſs diſtinguiſhed by the peculiarities of their orthography, than by the varieties in their ſtyle. To correct one irregularity is nothing; and if all our anomalies are to be rectified, we ſhall ſoon have a new language. The editors of grammars have generally acted with more diſcretion. They knew that every language was ſpoken

ken before it was written; that anomalous formations, too numerous and too firmly eſtabliſhed to be removed or reformed, had found their way into general uſe; and they therefore announced them as acknowledged irregularities, which could plead preſcription inſtead of analogy; and which, if leſs ſyſtematick, were by cuſtom more intelligible and more pleaſing.

But the moſt formidable enemy of permanent orthography is the endeavour to accommodate the ſpelling to the pronunciation; that the powers of the letters may, in every inſtance, correſpond to the ſounds of the words. And it is obſervable, that ever ſince our language might be conſidered as in any degree formed and ſettled, ſuch attempts have continually been made. The firſt, which we have upon record, was that of Sir Thomas Smith, an officer of ſtate under Elizabeth; and the laſt, that of the late Mr. Elphinſton, the maſter of an obſcure academy

demy in the neighbourhood of London. Theſe were bold attempts to make the orthography of the whole language at once correſpond to its pronunciation; and the abſurdity of them was immediately ſeen. In the latter particularly it was difficult to read a ſingle ſentence; and it was almoſt impoſſible to know our native tongue under its new diſguiſe. The project was therefore deſpiſed, and will ſoon be forgotten. Nor are ſuch attempts more abſurd than impracticable. In every living language there are tones and ſounds, which the letters of its alphabet cannot expreſs; and which therefore it is impoſſible to deſcribe. The colloquial and faſhionable pronunciation is continually varied by negligence, ignorance, and affectation; and if the orthography is to keep pace with theſe variations, the language itſelf muſt be in a ſtate of perpetual change. Every man, however, who wiſhes to alter the ſpelling of a ſingle word, in order to make it more nearly expreſs

expreſs the ſound, is guilty of a part of the abſurdity that has been cenſured, and contributes his proportion to the fluctuation of the language. I would not willingly loſe the ſecond *e* in *agreeable*, nor the ſecond *l* in *tranquillity;* and I would ſtrenuouſly contend for the *k* in *publick*, and the *u* in *favour* and *honour*. By this excluſion of letters, ſuppoſed to be unneceſſary, neither uſe nor propriety is improved; and etymology will often be obſcured or loſt.

With the great and general cauſes, whether internal or external, by which languages are corrupted or changed, I am not at preſent concerned. Over them our ſchools can have little influence. Hoſtile or commercial intercourſe with foreign nations, and frequent tranſlation from foreign languages; new acquiſitions in ſcience, and the extenſion of general knowledge; the ſearch of the orator and the poet after new alluſions and new modes of embelliſhment; and the ambi-

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Were the value of adhering to an eſtabliſhed orthography ſtrongly impreſſed upon the minds of our youth at ſchool; were they made fully ſenſible of the folly and

and the miſchiefs of departing from it; no illiterate writer of a novel, no learned coxcomb in ſpelling or pronunciation, would afterwards be able to corrupt their taſte, or tempt them to innovation. A fixed and ſettled orthography would preſerve the etymology and the hiſtory of our native tongue; a very pleaſing and uſeful branch of philological ſtudy: it would render the language a more eaſy acquiſition to foreigners, and better worth their attention: it would enable us to read each other's works with more facility and pleaſure; it would have continued our antient authors not only intelligible, but pleaſing to us; and it would give to ourſelves a chance of being hereafter underſtood. Spencer and Milton are already faſt receding into the rank of antients; and it is too probable that Pope and Dryden will become the Lydgate and the Chaucer of future times. Our language may periſh in the lapſe of ages, as other languages have periſhed; but let not thoſe,

thoſe, who are appointed to teach and to guard it, be themſelves its executioners.

The neglect of our own language in our publick ſchools and our univerſities is probably a remnant of that contempt, in which it was formerly held, and from which it does not yet appear to have entirely eſcaped. A very ſlight conſideration, however, will be ſufficient to ſhow that it is not unworthy of the ſtudy and the preſervation that have been recommended. To thoſe, who ſpeak it, at leaſt, its excellencies may be as eaſily pointed out, as one might expect them to be readily admitted. The Greek language, in the hands of the orator, the poet, and the hiſtorian, muſt be allowed to bear away the palm from every other known in the world; but to that only, in my opinion, need our own yield the precedence.

The defects of the Engliſh language, againſt which complaints have been ſpecifically and principally made, are the crowds

crowds of our conſonants, and the numbers of our monoſyllables. But even theſe are not without an apology. If it be thought, on one hand, that our monoſyllables have been too greatly multiplied, in order to expreſs thoſe relations of words or things to each other, which the Greek and Roman tongues expreſſed by the changes in their caſes and tenſes; our nouns of one ſyllable make us ample amends, on the other, by furniſhing ſo many terms with the requiſite accent, and of ſufficient dignity and ſtrength, for the terminations of the meaſures of our poetry. If, again, it be, as is univerſally allowed, one chief excellence of a language, that it conveys the largeſt proportion of meaning in the ſmalleſt number of terms, if thoſe phraſes be conſidered as the moſt expreſſive, which are the moſt conciſe, our monoſyllables ſhould not be too haſtily condemned. They need not ſhrink from a compariſon with many of the words of greater length, or the more

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circuitous expreſſions, of the moſt poliſhed languages in Europe.

The common notion, that conſonants render a language rough and unharmonious in proportion to the numbers of them in a ſyllable, is by no means univerſally juſt; and where it is juſt in its fulleſt extent, the language is not neceſſarily injured. What would be gained in ſweetneſs by the excluſion of theſe conſonants, would generally be loſt in ſtrength; and what is admitted to be harſhneſs, is frequently compenſated by expreſſion. This ſuppoſed harſhneſs too is often perceptible only to the eye. The real degree of it depends much upon the eaſe, with which the conſonants unite with the vowels and with each other; and ſtill more upon the voice and manner in which they are pronounced, and whether they are pronounced at all. Engliſh is widely different to the ear from the mouth of a native of Newcaſtle and a native of the metropolis: and if we

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notice and cenſure. Provincial tones and accents, and all defects in articulation, ſhould be corrected whenever they are heard; leſt they grow into eſtabliſhed habits, unknown, from their familiarity, to him who is guilty of them, and adopted by others, from the imitation of his manner, or their reſpect for his authority.

That a corrrect orthography ſhould always be enforced, will not be queſtioned: but doubts may ariſe as to what orthography is correct. I ſhould have no heſitation in deciding, with Horace and Quinctilian, in all caſes whatever, in favour of that, which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed. The permanency of the language is of much greater importance, than the irregularity of an analogy, or the excluſion or retention of a ſuperfluous letter. To the preſervation of our vernacular tongue our ſchools might eſſentially contribute; for they might in a great degree prevent or remedy that affec-

affectation, by which its ſtability is endangered. To write all ſubſtantives with capital letters, or to exclude them from adjectives derived from proper names, may perhaps be thought offences too ſmall or too contemptible for ſerious animadverſion. But the evil of innovation is always ſomething; and in theſe inſtances the advantage is certainly nothing. In his zeal for derivation or analogy, or in oſtentation of grammatical ſkill, a man of talents will ſometimes change the vowel in a ſubſtantive, or the preterite of a verb; and ſhould every other writer of eminence allow himſelf the ſame liberty, our authors might ſoon be little leſs diſtinguiſhed by the peculiarities of their orthography, than by the varieties in their ſtyle. To correct one irregularity is nothing; and if all our anomalies are to be rectified, we ſhall ſoon have a new language. The editors of grammars have generally acted with more diſcretion. They knew that every language was ſpoken

ken before it was written; that anomalous formations, too numerous and too firmly eſtabliſhed to be removed or reformed, had found their way into general uſe; and they therefore announced them as acknowledged irregularities, which could plead preſcription inſtead of analogy; and which, if leſs ſyſtematick, were by cuſtom more intelligible and more pleaſing.

But the moſt formidable enemy of permanent orthography is the endeavour to accommodate the ſpelling to the pronunciation; that the powers of the letters may, in every inſtance, correſpond to the ſounds of the words. And it is obſervable, that ever ſince our language might be conſidered as in any degree formed and ſettled, ſuch attempts have continually been made. The firſt, which we have upon record, was that of Sir Thomas Smith, an officer of ſtate under Elizabeth; and the laſt, that of the late Mr. Elphinſton, the maſter of an obſcure academy

demy in the neighbourhood of London. Theſe were bold attempts to make the orthography of the whole language at once correſpond to its pronunciation; and the abſurdity of them was immediately ſeen. In the latter particularly it was difficult to read a ſingle ſentence; and it was almoſt impoſſible to know our native tongue under its new diſguiſe. The project was therefore deſpiſed, and will ſoon be forgotten. Nor are ſuch attempts more abſurd than impracticable. In every living language there are tones and ſounds, which the letters of its alphabet cannot expreſs; and which therefore it is impoſſible to deſcribe. The colloquial and faſhionable pronunciation is continually varied by negligence, ignorance, and affectation; and if the orthography is to keep pace with theſe variations, the language itſelf muſt be in a ſtate of perpetual change. Every man, however, who wiſhes to alter the ſpelling of a ſingle word, in order to make it more nearly expreſs

expreſs the ſound, is guilty of a part of the abſurdity that has been cenſured, and contributes his proportion to the fluctuation of the language. I would not willingly loſe the ſecond *e* in *agreeable*, nor the ſecond *l* in *tranquillity*; and I would ſtrenuouſly contend for the *k* in *publick*, and the *u* in *favour* and *honour*. By this excluſion of letters, ſuppoſed to be unneceſſary, neither uſe nor propriety is improved; and etymology will often be obſcured or loſt.

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tlary, reputation, the Homer of Pope is a performance of ſuch excellence in its kind, as no other nation can boaſt.

In reſpect to poetry, indeed, the complaints have been the moſt frequent and loud; but ſurely not with the beſt reaſon. We have in England a poetical language; a diction diſtinct from proſe, and elevated above it: an advantage not enjoyed by our great literary rivals, the French. The poetry of France, indeed, may juſtly boaſt of various excellencies; but, as far as the diction only is concerned, it differs from their proſe in little elſe, than having a certain number of ſyllables in a line, and a rhyme at the end of it. Blank verſe is almoſt excluſively our own, and by no means without its utility and its elegance. In the minor works of minor poets, indeed, it has often been employed, where every reader would wiſh it had been avoided; where it ſeems to have been adopted from no other motive of preference, than to conceal the idleneſs or inca-

incapacity of the author. For dramatick poetry, however, it poſſeſſes an unrivalled propriety; in deſcriptive and didactick pieces it has ſometimes been employed with good effect; and in Paradiſe Loſt no man wiſhes the ſtructure of the verſes to be changed. In almoſt every ſpecies of original poetry we can produce works of ſuch excellence, as may fairly claim a competition with whatever antient or modern times can boaſt. That we have no meaſure of equal majeſty with the Hexameter of the Greeks and Romans, will be admitted without heſitation; and the Iliad muſt probably remain for ever without a rival. But to the Iliad and the Hexameter alone need we acknowledge our inferiority. In two inſtances only we ſeem to have failed, the ſonnet and the irregular ode; and in theſe I know not why we ſhould have been ambitious to ſucceed. The ſonnet is ſo unſuitable to the genius of our language, that it betrays in every line the difficulty

of its own production. Like complicated muſick, it ſhews rather the dexterity, than the knowledge, of the performer; and excites in the hearer more wonder than delight. Its aim is, not ſo much to produce an original or ſplendid ſentiment, as, like the iron bed of a tyrant, to reduce or extend it to the certain ſize; and muſt therefore often render it feeble by expanſion, or obſcure by mutilation. That a ſonnet may be found in our language, which may juſtly aſpire to the rank of an elegant trifle, or that ſuch a ſonnet may be read with pleaſure, it is far from being intended to deny. But to ſit down to the peruſal of theſe trifles by the hundred, has always appeared to me, like fixing upon the tricks of Merlin or Breſlau for the entertainment of a week.

To the irregular, or as it is with ſome affectation denominated, the Pindarick, ode, nothing probably could have reconciled us but cuſtom and prejudice. The

meaſures of Pindar are incorrect; becauſe in the earlier periods of poetry the rules of compoſition were not fixed; and the value of regularity was not fully known, or not duly appreciated: and it ſurely is not among the excellencies of a modern poet to imitate what proceeded from the ignorance of antient times, or the defects of an antient writer. The irregular ode cannot be *read at ſight.* The courſe of peruſal is continually interrupted by a very long or a very ſhort line; of which, indeed, the former is often languid, and the latter almoſt always without dignity. The correſponding rhymes muſt be ſought by the eye; for they are often at ſuch a diſtance that the ear has ceaſed to expect them. That the rhymes ſhould be forgotten by the reader, will, indeed, excite the leſs ſurprize, when it is conſidered, that they are ſometimes forgotten by the author. In the ode, generally allowed to be beſt, of which our language can boaſt, there are two lines without correſponding

rhymes *. That beautiful poetry may be occaſionally found in our Pindarick odes cannot be queſtioned. But the beauty does not ariſe from the irregularity of the meaſure. On the contrary, indeed, the beauty in all probability, and certainly the pleaſure of the reader, would have been encreaſed, had the meaſure been as regular, as the language or the ſentiments are elegant or novel. Quinctilian, after lamenting in the Latin language defects very ſimilar to thoſe, which have been ſo frequently lamented in our own, exhorts his countrymen to ſurmount or compenſate by their talents and exertions, the imperfections of their native tongue: and with this exhortation, if the ſuppoſed defects of the Engliſh language be real, and if the praiſe that has been beſtowed upon our literary productions be juſt, our writers muſt be allowed to have very fully complied. The value of a work

* Dryden's St. Cecilia's Day. Stanza 4. Line 9. Stanza 6. Line 22.

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muſt always be enhanced by the difficulty of its execution; and whatever is deducted from the character of our language, muſt be added to the credit of our authors.

We have at laſt, in a great meaſure, baniſhed the jargon of French and Latin from our courts of juſtice; and our advocates are allowed to ſpeak the dialect of other men. And we have of late ventured to write our diſquiſitions on art and ſcience in our native tongue; leaving to the other nations of Europe the ſame option, which they have often left to us, to ſtudy the language, or to tranſlate the books. That annotations on the authors of antiquity ſhould ſtill be written in Latin, there is no reaſon to complain. They are intended for the uſe of ſcholars of different nations, to the greater number of whom Latin is more familiar than any modern tongue. But why original compoſitions; why ſuch works as the elegant preface to Bellendenus, and the ingenious

genious diſſertation on the Manlian Legion ſhould have been publiſhed in the language of antient Rome, it were to be wiſhed the learned authors had aſſigned their reaſons. They might probably have ſatisfied their readers on a point, on which readers in general will not be able to ſatisfy themſelves.

It may ſurely be concluded, then, that the defects of the Engliſh language have been more complained of than felt; and that it ought to be a principal object of cultivation in our ſeats of literary education; that our ſtudents ſhould be made fully ſenſible of its value and its excellencies; in order that, by compoſitions in their native tongue, they may contribute at once to the diffuſion of knowledge, and to the honour of their language, and their country *.

* In Sheridan's *Lectures on the Art of Reading*, is a compliment to our language ſo juſt, ſo claſſical, and ſo conſonant to my own ſentiments, that I cannot deny myſelf the ſatisfaction of quoting, nor the reader the benefit

benefit of peruſing it. " On enquiry it would be found," ſays he, " that probably in no language in the world, have the vowels, diphthongs, ſemivowels and mutes been ſo happily blended, and in ſuch due proportion, to conſtitute the three great powers of ſpeech, melody, harmony, and expreſſion. And upon a fair compariſon it would appear, that the French have emaſculated their tongue, by rejecting ſuch numbers of their conſonants; and made it reſemble one of their painted courtezans, adorned with fripperies and fallals. That the German, by abounding too much in harſh conſonants and gutturals, has great ſize and ſtrength, like the ſtatue of Hercules Farneſe, but no grace. That the Roman, like the buſt of Antinous, is beautiful, indeed, but not manly. That the Italian has beauty, grace, and ſymmetry, like the Venus of Medicis, but is feminine. And that the Engliſh alone reſembles the antient Greek, in uniting the three powers of ſtrength, beauty and grace, like the Apollo of Belvidere."

CHAP. X.

On Writing, Arithmetick, and the Mathematicks.

THERE are ſome branches of education, of which the neceſſity is ſo obvious, or the utility ſo generally acknowledged, that all recommendation of them appears ſuperfluous; and all reaſoning in their favour, like arguments, to prove the truth of thoſe axioms, which never were diſputed.

Of this deſcription, ſurely, are the accompliſhments of writing and arithmetick. In moſt of the grammar ſchools in the provincial parts of the kingdom, they are become objects of ſerious attention; and, in addition to the original deſign of thoſe inſtitutions, a writing maſter is now periodically or conſtantly employed. In our publick ſchools, however, properly ſo

called, they yet form no part of the ſyſtem of inſtruction. They are not enjoined by the ſtatutes of thoſe eſtabliſhments; and the maſters do not conſider them as objects to which they are called upon to attend. It is probably ſuppoſed too, and, indeed, not wholly without grounds, that he, who is deſtined for a liberal profeſſion, may obtain ſufficient ſkill in the mechanical operations of writing and arithmetick, either before the age, at which our youth are uſually admitted into thoſe ſchools, or by employing the holidays and vacations in theſe ſecondary and auxiliary ſtudies. This is, indeed, one important reaſon, amongſt many others that might be adduced, why the parents ſhould inſiſt on the holidays being thus employed; and why the maſters ſhould exert their influence in the ſame cauſe; by recommending ſuch employment at the commencement of their different receſſes; and at the expiration of them, by enquiry and examination into what pro-

greſs had been made. They might, by this means, at the expence of little trouble to themſelves, do an eſſential ſervice to thoſe entruſted to their care. Their recommendation would have great weight in directing the judgment and conduct of the parent; and their cenſure or applauſe no leſs influence on the diligence of the ſtudent. It is never without regret that we can obſerve, what is not unfrequently ſeen, a man critically ſkilled in the learned languages, and imperfectly acquainted with the fundamental rules of arithmetick; a man qualified to inſtruct or delight us by his wiſdom or his wit, yet hardly able to convey his ſentiments in a legible hand. For thoſe, however, to whom it is neceſſary to excel in the accompliſhment under conſideration, our academies, and not our publick ſchools, are the proper places of education.

Quinctilian has told us, that the nobility in his time deſpiſed, or affected to deſpiſe, the mechanical dexterity of writing

ting a fine hand: and not many years ago the ſame affectation had an extenſive influence on people of faſhion in England. A letter was often conſidered as the more genteel; the leſs conveniently it could be read. The art of fine writing, however, ſeems at preſent to poſſeſs its due eſtimation amongſt us. It has riſen in value with every other object of taſte and decoration. It has obtained a place in the number of faſhionable accompliſhments; and it poſſeſſes the more ſubſtantial recommendation of being generally conſidered as an indiſpenſible requiſite for admiſſion into the counting-houſes of our merchants, and the publick offices of the ſtate. It may perhaps gratify curioſity to obſerve, that the celebrated Roger Aſcham, about the middle of the ſixteenth century, was one of the firſt, who cultivated amongſt us thoſe arts of ornamental writing, in which we now ſo greatly excel all the nations around us; and that he was indebted for his appointment

ment of correſponding ſecretary to the Univerſity of Cambridge, hardly leſs to the elegance of his penmanſhip, than to the excellence of his latinity.

How this uſeful art may be moſt effectually obtained, a few general rules, however obvious, cannot be too frequently repeated. The youth ſhould begin to write at a very early age; for the well known reaſon, that the more early any mechanical operation is begun, the greater dexterity is generally acquired. The learning to read will be aſſiſted by learning to write; for what he has once written, he will always be able to read. Till a very conſiderable improvement has been made, he ſhould be taught to imitate, not the engraved models too often employed, but manuſcript copies at the head of his page. To the former he will ſeldom advert; to the latter he may reaſonably be compelled to attend. To correct any aukward habit in the form or inclination of his letters, one of the moſt

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uſeful expedients is to make him write a much larger hand than he has ever before attempted. He ſhould be required at all times to keep his book clean and neat; not only for his own credit, and the credit of his maſter; but becauſe a neat copy book has often laid the foundation, or ſhewn the firſt ſymptoms, of taſte in all the elegant arts of life. In the detail of managing the pen and the limbs, in the acquiſition of this valuable accompliſhment, the uſual expedients of our teachers ſeem not to require or to admit of much improvement; for in no other country is the art of writing cultivated with ſuch laudable diligence, or ſuch diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs.

Nothing elſe, perhaps, that bears the name of ſcience, is ſo eaſy of acquiſition as arithmetick. It is uſually taught during the years of childhood; becauſe the capacity of a child is equal to the comprehenſion of its general laws, and the performance of its ordinary operations. This facility, however, it may be obſerved,

ſerved, is of no very antient date amongſt us. We are indebted for it to the introduction of the Arabick numerals, ſcarcely three centuries ago; and perhaps ſkill in arithmetick might not yet have been ſo generally diffuſed, or calculation have grown ſo eaſy and familiar to us, had not utility concurred with delight in the recommendation of it; had we not become ſenſible of the advantages of commerce, as well as of the pleaſures of ſcience.

In the art of teaching arithmetick there is little other difficulty than what may be occaſioned by the ignorance or negligence of the children to be taught. The four fundamental rules may be firſt learnt in what are called *whole numbers*, and immediately repeated in *compound*, or numbers of different denominations; through all our variety of coins, weights and meaſures. Of theſe it will of courſe be neceſſary to commit the tables to memory: and to retain them, like the grammar of a language, not only by continual application in practice, but by repeating

peating them at ſtated intervals, as a leſſon; that what is always wanted, may be always at hand. I recommend the uſe of a printed book; both becauſe it leaves the inſtructor that time for teaching his pupil to work his example, which muſt otherwiſe have been employed partly in deviſing it, and partly in performing the operation; and becauſe in ſuch books thoſe examples are generally more varied, and better adapted to their reſpective purpoſes, than could have been produced by the maſter at the moment. Any omiſſions or defects that are obſerved in the printed work may ſtill be ſupplied by the invention of the teacher. The pupil ſhould commence the ſtudy of arithmetick at as early an age as poſſible; both becauſe by early application ſomething is always gained, and nothing can be loſt; and becauſe arithmetick is ſeldom fully underſtood, till the ſtudent has been carried twice over the ſame ground. For the ſecond courſe I would by all means

means recommend a different publication from that which was employed in the firſt. The examples will be different in themſelves, and the rules differently expreſſed. The pupil cannot copy his former operations; and he will probably comprehend the objects more clearly, or retain them more permanently in his memory, from having contemplated them in various poſitions, and under various forms. To the firſt courſe Dilworth's book ſeems beſt adapted, and Bonnycaſtle's to the ſecond.

In his firſt progreſs through arithmetick it is ſufficient that the boy can mechanically perform an operation by a given rule; in the ſecond, he muſt be carefully inſtructed in the uſe and application of the general principle. But this will never be fully underſtood, till his faculties have obtained a conſiderable degree of maturity; and till he has been exerciſed in miſcellaneous queſtions; where he muſt himſelf diſcover the proceſs

ceſs by which the reſult required is to be found. For this purpoſe no book in our language is equal to Clare's Recreations. On this ſubject frequently occurs an inſtance of impatience in parents, not more troubleſome to ſchoolmaſters, than unreaſonable in itſelf. In order to determine the youth's progreſs in arithmetick, a queſtion is propoſed to him at home, which, under the various alarms occaſioned by the want of his rule, the abſence of his teacher, and the apprehenſion of his father's diſpleaſure and his own diſgrace, he is unable to perform; and the maſter is cenſured for not having taught the youth, what he was not yet able to learn; the application of general principles, while his intellect did not allow him to comprehend more than the uſe of ſpecial rules.

One point I would the more ſtrongly recommend, becauſe it is too often neglected; that every youth ſhould be thoroughly inſtructed in vulgar and decimal fractions.

fractions. They are the moſt pleaſing and the moſt valuable branch of arithmetick; and without them no man certainly can be conſidered either as an exact or a compleat accountant. The ſyſtem to be purſued for the purpoſe is equally obvious and indiſpenſible. As ſoon as their appropriate rules are underſtood, let them be conſtantly applied to the ordinary leſſons of arithmetick. Whatever proportions of weights or meaſures may occur in the queſtion to be ſolved, let the operation be firſt performed by the ordinary rules. Let theſe proportions be then reduced to their proper terms in a vulgar and in a decimal fraction; and let the youth repeat his performance under each of thoſe denominations. The reſult of each different proceſs being always the ſame, will not more prove the correctneſs of his work, than it will delight his imagination and improve his underſtanding.

The

The utility and importance of arithmetick, in its proper province of calculation, are univerſally known and confeſſed; but this is by no means its only recommendation. It is the firſt and eaſieſt abſtract reaſoning, to which the mind is accuſtomed: it is the firſt ſtudy that renders the laws and the practice of demonſtration familiar to us; and it is of eſſential value as the foundation or the inſtrument of mathematical ſcience: it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to all thoſe branches of it, which do not depend upon geometry alone. The line, indeed, where arithmetick ends, and mixed mathematicks begin, is not eaſily aſcertained; nor will it ſoon be determined on which ſide of the boundary *Fractions* and the *Roots* are to be arranged. The ſubſerviency of arithmetick to mathematicks is one of the reaſons, for which I have ventured to recommend it to the attention of our publick ſchools. It is equally known and lamented, how frequently

quently their pupils are ſent to the univerſities, not only without ſuch a knowledge of arithmetick, as might be uſeful or ornamental in the ordinary tranſactions of their future life; but without ſuch ſkill in numbers, as ſhould enable them afterwards to proſecute mathematical ſtudies with facility and ſucceſs. This error, and its inconveniences, however, appear at preſent to be generally underſtood; and it is to be preſumed, therefore, will ſoon be generally corrected. But to enable our ſons to appear in college with the greateſt poſſible credit and advantage, to a competent knowledge of arithmetick the elements of mathematical ſcience itſelf ſhould be added, during their continuance at ſchool. Nor will this form any very burthenſome addition to the preſent claims on their time and attention: For it has been very juſtly obſerved, that while nothing is ſo difficult of acquiſition as languages, nothing is ſo eaſy as mathematicks.

Skill

Skill in the mathematical ſciences ſeems eſſential to the character of a ſcholar; and when attained, is equally pleaſing, honourable, and beneficial. In practice it is ſometimes neceſſary to the diſcharge of profeſſional duties; and in ſpeculation it is always uſeful; as it contributes, more perhaps than any other intellectual acquiſition, to preſerve the imagination in due ſubjection to the judgment. It is allowed to form or to teach the moſt valuable logick. Its definitions are the natural ſources of preciſion in our ideas. It renders the mind equally vigilant againſt conceſſions too liberal in the commencement of an argument, or concluſions more extenſive than the premiſes will ſupport; and while it guards us againſt falſe reaſoning, it muſt ſecure us againſt the deluſions of falſe philoſophy. Habitual attention to the proceſs of demonſtration will protect us equally againſt the reproach of puerile credulity, and the raſhneſs of preſumptuous deciſion. Thoſe narra-

narratives of wonder, which find eaſ
acceſs to the minds of the ignorant an
the thoughtleſs, ſink at once before hin
who calculates probabilities, into their na
tural inſignificance; or are conſigned t
their proper origin, vanity and falſehood
He who can juſtly appreciate the force c
argument, and evidence, finds no diffi
culty in believing the attributes of th
deity, and the obligations of virtue. Th
ſcepticiſm of Bayle has been imputed t
his ignorance of mathematical ſcience
and Newton, on the contrary, was th
ſincere believer and the zealous advocat
of the Chriſtian revelation.

The higher departments of the mathe
maticks, however, are ſeldom taught i
our academies, and can ſeldom be re
quired. To inveſtigate the harmony o
forms and their proportions, and to con
template univerſal and tranſcendenta
truth is, indeed, one of the ſublimeſt,
as well as of the moſt pleaſing, occupa
tions of the human mind. But this i

Skill in the mathematical ſciences ſeems eſſential to the character of a ſcholar; and when attained, is equally pleaſing, honourable, and beneficial. In practice it is ſometimes neceſſary to the diſcharge of profeſſional duties; and in ſpeculation it is always uſeful; as it contributes, more perhaps than any other intellectual acquiſition, to preſerve the imagination in due ſubjection to the judgment. It is allowed to form or to teach the moſt valuable logick. Its definitions are the natural ſources of preciſion in our ideas. It renders the mind equally vigilant againſt conceſſions too liberal in the commencement of an argument, or concluſions more extenſive than the premiſes will ſupport; and while it guards us againſt falſe reaſoning, it muſt ſecure us againſt the deluſions of falſe philoſophy. Habitual attention to the proceſs of demonſtration will protect us equally againſt the reproach of puerile credulity, and the raſhneſs of preſumptuous deciſion. Thoſe narra-

or Bonnycaſtle. The Navigation of Moore and the Sphericks of Kelly are undoubtedly the books moſt ſuitable to the ſeaman; and for the ſoldier the works of Muller are entitled to the preference. To the ſchool boy Donne is ſufficient for Trigonometry, and for Algebra, Bonnycaſtle, or the abridgment of Saunderſon. On every ſubject, to which he has turned his attention, the publications of Hutton may be ſafely recommended; but as a ſchool book, his Courſe of Mathematicks merits peculiar praiſe. I have entered into no inveſtigation of the manner, in which the various parts of mathematical ſcience may be moſt ſucceſsfully taught; leſt it ſhould appear equally tedious and uſeleſs; a minute detail would ſwell this part of the work to a diſproportionate extent; and the ſtudents are generally of ſuch an age, that no peculiar arts of inſtruction are required.

From

From the nature and extent of our commerce arithmetick has acquired, in this country, a peculiar value, and a proportionate ſhare of publick eſteem. A knowledge of accounts is undoubtedly uſeful to every man; but to a merchant it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary. Hence ariſes another object of inſtruction in our ſchools, very frequent, very difficult, and very important, the article of book-keeping, or merchants accounts: and for this every academy muſt either be furniſhed with a competent teacher, or relinquiſh its claim to the proper conduct of Britiſh education. I am aware of the complaint ſo frequently and ſo loudly urged, that merchants accounts are but imperfectly taught even in our beſt ſchools; that a youth from them never enters a counting-houſe fit to be truſted with the books. That a youth, from having learnt only the theory of an art, ſhould not immediately be perfect in the practice; or that a boy ſhould not poſſeſs

the diſcretion and ſteadineſs of manhood; theſe, ſurely, are not very novel or very extraordinary diſcoveries. But, when due allowance has been made for the circumſtances of each particular caſe, I will venture to aſſert, that the complaint is as groundleſs in point of fact, as it appears to be ſevere upon our teachers. That boys at ſchool are frequently carried through a courſe of merchants accounts without underſtanding them, however it may be lamented, cannot be denied. For they are frequently required by the parents to learn them, before they have either attained to the proper age, or have acquired ſufficient ſkill in arithmetick, for the purpoſe. The preceptor therefore may be pitied for being compelled to undertake what is impracticable; but he ſhould not be cenſured for failing in the performance. If there be a merchant weak enough to expect a child of ſuch a deſcription to underſtand his buſineſs, he certainly deſerves any diſappointment which

which he may ſuffer; or if he will truſt a youth at firſt with the management of his counting-houſe, he ought not to complain of any conſequences that may reſult from his own folly.

When a youth is become expert in all the ordinary rules of arithmetick, and has attained that degree of underſtanding, which is uſually attained at the age of fifteen or ſixteen years; let him then, with an able maſter, go through a ſyſtem of book-keeping in what is called the Italian method, or *Double Entry*; and I will engage for his being qualified to perform all ſuch duties in a counting-houſe, as can with propriety be entruſted to his care. Almoſt every mercantile houſe has ſomething in the mode of keeping the books peculiar to itſelf. But when the youth is fully maſter of the general principle, by having been exerciſed in the theory at full length, he will readily comprehend any abridgment of the labour, any peculiarity in the method, which he

may be called upon to adopt. Under the direction of his principal, or of a more experienced book-keeper, he will become equal to his taſk as early as he ought to be required to undertake it.

The mode of teaching this part of arithmetick admits little variety, and can require little direction. A printed work ſhould be adopted as the baſis; and till lately it might reaſonably have been made a queſtion, which of our numerous publications on the ſubject, was beſt adapted to the purpoſe. But Kelly's Elements of Book-keeping has now removed all heſitation in the choice. In all the great requiſites of ſuch a treatiſe, ſimplicity of principle, and perſpicuity of arrangement; appoſiteneſs of examples, and reſemblance to the ordinary tranſactions of a counting-houſe, it appears entitled to a decided preference over all the works, that have gone before it: and the book itſelf ſufficiently explains the manner,

ner, in which it may be moſt advantageouſly employed.

In the education of the future merchant, however, attention will be demanded for objects of ſtill greater moment than dexterity in the management of his books. In this country his profeſſion is honourable, and his character reſpectable. He is become in various points of view not only valuable, but neceſſary, to the welfare of the community. His judgment muſt often be conſulted on, what his purſuits particularly influence, the police and the finances of the kingdom. The commerce, which was once cultivated ſolely as the means of acquiring wealth to the individual, is now become neceſſary to the national defence; and therefore to the national independence. But by trade only, upon a liberal and extenſive ſcale, conducted not more neceſſarily by a large capital, than by a capacious mind, can our foreign commerce be ſupported and ſecured. A Britiſh merchant

likewiſe generally and reaſonably looks forward to diſtinction, as well as to opulence; to the employment, as well as the acquiſition, of his fortune; to the retirement of the country, and the enjoyment of leiſure and tranquillity; to the provincial honours of his neighbourhood, or to a ſeat in the great council of the nation. In the ſyſtem of his inſtruction, therefore, theſe proſpects ſhould not be neglected. Their diſtance is compenſated by their importance. It is, however, a taſk as difficult in itſelf, as its accompliſhment is deſireable, to unite liberal and mercantile education; to keep a youth long enough at ſchool for his enjoyment of the pleaſures of literature, and not too long for his ſubmiſſion to the patient induſtry of trade; to qualify him for buſineſs, and for ſociety; to retain his taſte for books during the acquiſition of money; to give him ſuch powers, as ſhall delight for a time in the buſtle of com-

commercial tranſactions; and afterwards reliſh the tranquillity of retirement. It has been juſtly obſerved, that nature ſets her gifts on the right hand and on the left; and that as you approach one advantage, you neceſſarily recede from another. Of the bleſſings within his reach, therefore, a wiſe man will make his choice, and be content. Nor will the obſervation loſe any of its force, when applied to the ſubject under conſideration. If, however, the two extremes can be in any degree reconciled; if a medium can any where be found between the diſſipation of our publick ſchools, and the abſurd reſtraints of private tuition; if a taſte for polite literature can any where be cultivated, in conjunction with the requiſite qualifications for trade, it muſt be in ſome of thoſe academies, with which almoſt every part of the kingdom abounds. It is equally to the honour of our ſchools and of our merchants, that

numerous inſtances may be ſpecified, where theſe difficulties have been in a great meaſure ſurmounted; where theſe ſeeming contrarieties have been united.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

On the Study of the Claſſicks.

THE ſtudy of the remains of Greek and Roman literature has always been conſidered as one of the moſt eſſential parts of a liberal education. To this the ambition of our ingenuous youth is commonly directed; to this the largeſt portion of their time and labour is devoted. Nor has it been eſtimated above its real value. The induſtry employed upon it has been abundantly rewarded. Its utility, however, like that of all other intellectual acquiſitions, is fully known to thoſe only by whom it has been felt. In others, indeed, it has ſometimes excited the veneration naturally due to ſuperior abilities; and ſometimes only the wonder

of ignorance, gazing at a diſtance on what it could not underſtand; or the cavils of envy, affecting to deſpiſe what it was unable to attain.

It ſeems incumbent upon the author of an eſſay, like the preſent, to ſtate the true uſe and value of claſſical literature; that ſcholars may not be ſuſpected of magnifying its merits, only becauſe it is confined wholly to themſelves; and that it may appear to the publick, in contradiſtinction to the blind partialities of other lovers, that we can aſſign rational grounds for our attachment and admiration.

The ſtudy of the claſſicks, from the firſt application to the tenſes and declenſions of their language, to the laſt peruſal of their ſublimeſt poetry, is admirably calculated to employ, to enlarge, and to improve all the faculties of the human mind. To analyze the grammatical conſtruction, and to inveſtigate the meaning, of a difficult paſſage; to trace its various figures and alluſions, and to detect its de-

deficiencies, or diſplay its beauties; this is the employment, which every teacher enjoins, and of which every ſtudent finds the benefit. When I ſee a youth exploring his grammar, his dictionary, his notes, every reſource within his reach, in order to aſcertain the ſenſe of his author, and to appear with credit at the leſſon; when I ſee his ſagacity quickened by practice, and his confidence in his own powers encreaſed by ſucceſsful exertion; I look forward with pleaſure to the period, when his talents and his induſtry, in ſome liberal profeſſion, ſhall be honourable to himſelf, and beneficial to the ſociety in which providence has placed him. The habits of application, indeed, which theſe ſtudies require, are valuable in every point of view. They equally prepare the youth for the immediate acquiſition of ſcience, and the future tranſactions of life; for the purſuit of wiſdom, and the practice of virtue.

That

That the memory is continually ſtrengthened by exerciſe is univerſally admitted; and that it is in a great degree formed and created by it, has ſometimes been plauſibly maintained. The *repetitions* of the ſchool boy, therefore, are intended, not merely to aſſiſt him in the acquiſition of a language, by fixing a given number of its words in his mind; but to augment and improve the faculty, on which his future knowledge muſt depend.

The imagination is perhaps originally formed, and it is certainly enriched, by the accumulation of ideas in the mind; and claſſical literature not only furniſhes many, which cannot elſewhere be found; but while it enlarges the number, corrects and regulates the ſtores, which it ſupplies. Of all our faculties, indeed, our taſte appears to derive from this ſource the greateſt improvement. By employing ſo much time and attention upon the poliſhed models of compoſition, left us by the ſcholars of antiquity, the moſt elabo-

elaborate and the moſt elegant works, which human ingenuity is known to have produced, the mind acquires a ſtandard of judgment, an intuitive perception of beauties and defects, which can by no other means be obtained; and which, when once poſſeſſed, cannot afterwards be loſt. Upon this, indeed, depends in a great degree our ſenſibility to literary excellence; much of the pleaſure, with which we are afterwards to read; and not a little of the ability, with which we are to write.

The ſtudy of the claſſicks muſt naturally be the beſt foundation for the ſtudy of languages in general. The knowledge of one grammar will always facilitate the acquiſition of another; and the languages in queſtion not only poſſeſs the greateſt regularity and preciſion in their grammatical ſtructure, but have the additional advantage of being no longer ſubject to fluctuation or corruption. Securely depoſited in the monuments, which the ſages

ſages of antiquity have erected, the reward of the benefits to be derived from them to all future ages will be the immortality they have deſerved. What theory would teach us to expect, is found by experience to be true, that he who is already acquainted with the Greek and Roman tongues attains thoſe of the modern nations of Europe, with an eaſe and rapidity, which other ſtudents have in vain attempted to rival.

In the ſtudy of the ſciences, the advantages of claſſical literature, though leſs direct and leſs conſiderable, are by no means without weight and importance. The peruſal of Sophocles and Cicero will not immediately teach us to read Euclid and Buffon; but by having enlarged and ſtrengthened our faculties, they will enable us to underſtand them. I may appeal to the general experience of our teachers for the truth of the obſervation, that the moſt expert ſtudent in mathematical ſcience is the claſſical ſcholar.

In

In whatever department of ſcience we are deſirous to excel, we ſhall find many of its peculiar terms derived from the languages of antiquity. By the mere Engliſh ſcholar, therefore, theſe terms muſt be leſs clearly underſtood, leſs eaſily remembered, and leſs readily applied. Nor is this conſideration without its weight. The profeſſors of each ſcience reſpectively have uſually endeavoured to compreſs its general principles into the technical terms which they have adopted or deviſed: and they have ſo far ſucceeded, that in proportion as thoſe terms are more clearly comprehended, the ſtudent will acquire the ſcience itſelf with the greater facility, and retain it in his memory with the more fidelity and preciſion.

The diſcovery and the ſtudy of the Greek and Roman writers is always acknowledged to have been one of the principal cauſes of the revival of learning in Europe; and it is obſervable, that learning

ing has flouriſhed or decayed in almoſt every country in proportion as theſe writers have been known or unknown, cultivated or neglected. It has been maintained too, that at the ſame important period of the revival of letters amongſt us, a deep and critical acquaintance with the writers of antiquity was neceſſary, to enable the mind to riſe above the impoſing pedantry, the ſophiſtical ſubtleties, and the unintelligible jargon, which had found their way from the monaſteries into the ſchools, and from the ſchools into the world. And if this opinion be juſt, it will not be denied, that the judgment, the penetration, and the ſound logick, which claſſical literature ſeldom fails to ſupply, are equally neceſſary in our own times, to prepare us to reſiſt the malignant influence of falſe ſcience, falſe reaſoning, and falſe philoſophy.

In thoſe publications of politer literature, which are deſigned for our inſtruction and improvement, and in thoſe lighter

lighter works of wit or humour, which aim at little more than our amuſement, in both theſe our ableſt authors uſually abound in alluſions to the ſentiments and maxims, the narratives, or the fables of claſſical antiquity. Theſe are the ſources, from which the writer derives many of his richeſt treaſures; many of his moſt valuable materials, whether for neceſſary illuſtration or fanciful embelliſhment: and if by the reader the ſame ground has not been trodden, and ſuch alluſions are not underſtood, he loſes half the pleaſure, and often half the advantage, which he would otherwiſe have obtained.

Few men in modern times, in our own country at leaſt, have been diſtinguiſhed for ſuperior talents, without having enjoyed ſome reputation for claſſical literature. Sometimes, indeed, their rapid progreſs in it at ſchool, their ſuperiority over their fellows, only is recorded; but they have more frequently been known to continue to cultivate it amidſt the buſtle

buſtle of publick buſineſs, and the infirmities of declining life. If it be urged, on one hand, that this ſtudy was forced upon them by our general ſyſtem of education; it muſt be obſerved, on the other, that ſuch men have ſeldom failed to applaud the ſyſtem, by which they have profited, and to acknowledge their obligations to the writers of Greece and Rome. It was not that their diſtinguiſhed talents were accidentally directed to the ſtudy of the claſſicks; but the ſtudy of the claſſicks was one of the principal means by which their talents acquired their diſtinction.

Almoſt every man, who has not been fortunate enough to obtain the advantage of a claſſical education, inceſſantly laments the want of it. Inſtead of enjoying without alloy thoſe rational pleaſures, which literary ſociety is ſo well calculated to communicate, he is continually mortified by the ſenſe of his own ignorance and inferiority. While he, on the contrary, who poſſeſſes a competent know-

knowledge of the learned languages, is furniſhed with an unfailing ſource of amuſement or inſtruction for himſelf and his friends; and enjoys that conſcioufneſs of ſuperiority, which, though it may ſometimes prove the nurſe of vanity and the parent of inſolence, is highly pleaſing to that ambition, which is natural to the mind of man.

In pleading, ſays Cicero, though we do not always employ the liberal arts, yet the hearer immediately diſcovers whether we underſtand them; and the benefits of claſſical literature, though not always brought forward by the poſſeſſor, are never long concealed. Though no quotation ſhould be made; though no diſquiſition on the ſubject ſhould ariſe; yet will our acquaintance with the authors of antiquity continually appear; and appear to our advantage. In our literary compoſitions, in our publick ſpeaking, and in our familiar converſation, it will always contribute to the clear-

clearneſs and preciſion of our ideas, and to the correctneſs and elegance of our language; it will give additional taſte, animation, and intelligence to our diſcourſe, on ſmall as well as great occaſions, from the firſt ſentence to the laſt. So ſenſible was Gaſſendi of the value of Greek and Roman literature, that during his whole life, independently of all other attention to the ſubject, he impoſed it upon himſelf as a taſk, to repeat from the antient poets at leaſt ſix hundred verſes every day.

Nor do our obligations to claſſical literature terminate in knowledge or in pleaſure alone; it is not without a beneficial influence on our morals. It is not merely that it ſupplies rational amuſement for hours of leiſure; and therefore furniſhes a bulwark againſt the inroads of vice: it is not merely that it enlarges the underſtanding; and therefore tends to rectify the heart; or that it refines taſte and ſenſibility; and therefore improves

proves the feelings of humanity: but the ſages of antiquity have left behind them the precept and the example of almoſt every practical duty. Elevation of mind, and independence of ſpirit, conſummate prudence, and inflexible juſtice, intrepidity in danger, and fortitude in calamity, fidelity in friendſhip, the obligation of filial piety, and the offices of patriotiſm; all theſe duties, and ſuch as theſe, are not only recommended by every grace of eloquence or of poetry; but illuſtrated by examples that have exalted human nature. The youthful mind will not dwell upon theſe without catching ſome portion of the ſpirit, which it contemplates; it will imbibe at once a taſte for literature and the love of virtue. The defects in the ſyſtem of ethicks, which occaſionally deform the claſſick pages of antient times, the judgment of the preceptor will not fail to point out, and to ſtigmatize with the cenſure they may deſerve. In the ſofter duties of our nature, indeed,

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in the offices of benevolence and mercy, the heathen philoſophers cannot be our inſtructors; for what they had not learnt, they cannot teach. Theſe it is our happier lot to have derived from a purer ſource; and to practiſe, not only upon higher authority, but in the hope of ſuch a reward, as unaſſiſted reaſon did not diſcover, and could not promiſe to beſtow.

If thus valuable and extenſive be our obligations to claſſical literature, they will ſurely juſtify, what, indeed, has not eſcaped cenſure or complaint, the large portion of time uſually and neceſſarily beſtowed upon it. The juſtification too will be more complete and ſatisfactory, when it is conſidered, that much of this time is the ſeaſon of childhood, when little elſe would be attempted or obtained; that daily obſervation warrants us in concluding, the hours would otherwiſe be leſs uſefully employed; and that no other ſyſtem has yet been deviſed, from which the intellectual powers can derive

derive equal advantage and improvement.

The ſuperficial and common place objections, not unfrequently urged againſt this general attention to the claſſicks, ſeem hardly to deſerve a minute and ſeparate examination. One parent may ſtill enquire, what advantage can accrue to his ſon from the attainment of languages, which he will never be called upon to ſpeak! A ſecond may aſk, what information is to be obtained from Greek and Roman authors, which our own writers cannot equally afford! and a third may demand, why his child ſhould be tormented during the moſt pleaſing ſeaſon of life with the purſuit of ſuch knowledge, as can be of little uſe in the acquiſition of money! But to theſe enquiries, and ſuch as theſe, I have no other anſwer to give, and, it is preſumed, no other will be thought neceſſary, than what the preſent diſquiſition has already ſupplied.

That I would recommend claſſical literature to every ſtudent, who has the means and the opportunity to obtain it, the encomium already paſſed upon it will ſufficiently demonſtrate. In ſome profeſſions it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary; in others it is highly uſeful; and in every reſpectable ſituation of life it is an ornament and an advantage. It is therefore to be purſued, where-ever it does not require ſuch an expence, as prudence muſt condemn; where-ever it does not demand the time, which ought to be devoted to the acquiſition of information more immediately neceſſary; and where-ever it does not interfere with the diſcharge of duties, that cannot innocently be neglected. Where this literature may be moſt ſucceſsfully ſtudied is a queſtion, which the reader will find already decided; if not to his own ſatisfaction, according to the beſt judgment of the author.

END OF VOL. I.

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